

THE LIVING AGE.

No. 1073.—24 December, 1864.

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MY MOTHER-IN-LAW.

"A perfect woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command."

Those gentle tones no more I hear,
Which from thy lips, beloved one,
Were wont to fall upon my ear,
Ere yet the day had well begun.

When darkness spreads her raven wings,
And sleep on downy pinions light
To human care oblivion brings,—
No more I hear thy kind "Good-night."

No more in its accustomed place
Thy venerated form I see,
Distinguished for its matron grace,
And mien of tranquil dignity.

The tender love that warmed thy breast,
And overflowed on all below,—
In blessing others only blest,—
'Tis mine, alas ! no more to know.

The beauty of thy daily life,—
So meek, unselfish, and resigned,—
Shone brighter through thy lengthened strife ;
Like silver by the fire refined.

Translated to a happier sphere,
Those virtues in full glory bloom,
Which shied around their fragrance here,
And made a paradise of home ;—

Bereft, and lone, but for thy love ;
Which sweetly falling through the night,
Like dew distilling from above,
Dispelled the darkness by its light.

Thy steady flow of kindness, still
Unchilled by age, unchanged by years,
Has often caused my eyes to fill
With grateful and admiring tears.

All comfort in that word implied,
I owe to thy unweary care ;
And oft I've thought, with conscious pride,
I entertained an angel there.

Not unawares, however veiled ;—
A faith to mortals rarely given,—
A charity that never failed,—
Proclaimed the lineage of heaven !

—*Church Journal.*

L.

FERNS.

In the cool and quiet nooks,
By the side of running brooks ;
In the forest's green retreat,
With the branches overhead,
Nestling at the old trees' feet,
Choose we there our mossy bed.

On tall cliffs that woo the breeze,
Where no human footstep presses,
And no eye our beauty sees,
There we wave our maiden tresses.

In the mouths of mountain caves,
Whence the rapid torrent gushes,
Joying in the spray that laves,
As it wildly foaming rushes.

In the clefts of crumbling walls,
On old ruins sad and hoary,
Filling up the ancient halls
With a new and verdant glory,

Where the shady banks are steepest,
Sheltering from the sunlight's glow,
Loving best the shadiest, deepest,
Where the tallest hedgerows grow.

In the pleasant woodland glades,
Where the antlered deer are straying,
Lifting there our lofty heads,
There our mimic groves displaying.

Then the treacherous marsh's bosom,
Decking with our regal pride,
There alone allowed to blossom
(Boon to all our kin denied).

Though we boast no lovely bloom,
That can rival with the flowers ;
Though we fling no sweet perfume ;
Though no varied hue is ours—

Yet hath Nature framed our race
In a mould so light and fair,
That a beauty and a grace
Shed we round us everywhere.

—*Chambers's Journal.*

NO !

His was a heart so true and strong,
So wise, in all but human wrong,
So fit for woman's trust,
That when she spoke the fatal "No,"
It smote him with a weight of woe
That crushed him to the dust.

The why, we never knew, still less
Could hazard a presumptive guess,
So reticent is pain ;
We only knew she could not take
The hand he offered by mistake,
Or offered but in vain.

And all men noted from that day
He moved as in blinded way,
Helpless, without a plan :
Ah, what miraculous change of state
One simple syllable can create
Within the heart of man.

And she lived evermore apart,
Nor gave to any man her heart,
Until the day she died,
When, to the friends around her bed,
She breathed his name and smiled and said,
"Bury me by his side."

—*Transcript.*

From Fraser's Magazine.

NANCY'S TRYST.

A REMINISCENCE OF THE HIGHLANDS.

We have had death on the premises,—old Donald, the game-keeper, gardener, coachman, and poacher-in-ordinary to the united households of the Laburnums, has shaken the dust out of his last pair of shoes, and left a world of which he never thought much. Donald did not belong to what, in the slang of translated Cockneys, is called the Gushing School. He was a confirmed grumbler,—not, indeed, venturing to impeach the arrangements of Providence (which in his view had been fixed from a remote period), but by no means desiring to conceal his impression that, generally speaking, his fellow-creatures were a set of arrant bunglers and knaves. The doctor had, one autumn morning, fished him out of a wet ditch, where he was standing up to his knees in frozen water, watching a flock of wild geese that were feeding in a neighboring field. Instead of having him up for poaching, the doctor, on the principle of setting a thief to catch a thief, made him his keeper. He proved a capital servant, his only fault being that his knowledge of march fences was always of the vaguest; and that the doctor, when out shooting under his keeper's guidance, frequently found himself in the choicest preserves of his neighbors. But there was a dash of the gypsy in Donald's Celtic blood. He was shy, reserved, *dour*. He did not understand what "gratitude" meant; he actually bore a grudge against the doctor for getting him out of the ditch, into which, both literally and metaphorically, he had sunk; for Donald had seen better days. It was said that in his time he had had wife and child. What accident, or train of accidents, had made him a castaway, I did not know. But Donald underwent his reverses like a Stoic, or rather like the Fatalist, which he was. In theological matters Donald belonged to the straitest sect of the disciples of Calvin. It was pre-ordained that he was to become what he had become. So that he bore, or could have borne, the great trials of life, which wear the heart-strings of less robust natures, without murmur or complaint. What was he, that he should challenge the immutable decrees of the Almighty? But accepted in this spirit, his trials did not tend to soften his character. He took them sternly and sourly, and though he never ac-

cused his Maker, he made himself very unpleasant to his fellow-creatures. He dug the garden, he groomed the horses, he pruned the pear-trees, in the spirit of a martyr, and under protest. You might have fancied from the expression of his mouth that he was always consuming crab-apples. Occasionally, however, his habitual sullenness seemed to thaw. Cissy managed him as she thought fit; he could not resist the unclouded eyes, and the frank imperiousness of her childhood. With his gun on his shoulder, too, the spirit of the poacher revived. To the bottom of his heart he was a sportsman, and when he was tramping across the muir, he sometimes forgot that the world was, upon the whole, a failure and a blunder,—especially if birds were abundant and the dogs worked well. The dogs were his speciality; he managed them with admirable tact; he was their guide, philosopher, and friend, and they were his confidants. To them alone, while engaged in their feeding or cleaning, he frankly confided his opinion upon the way in which his fellow-men contrived to mismanage the universe. He grumbled and growled like one of themselves. He would tell Dash that he had as little sense as the doctor or the parson, and Juno that she was vainer than a woman. In early times there had been a vein of humor in Donald,—and a vein of humor is often the salvation of a man; but this vein, in Donald's case, had long since petrified into a mere fossil.

Donald had been ailing for long. His "rheumatics"—the fruit of forays after wild-duck in the winter moonlight—were very hard upon him. His imagination, indeed, had given his tormentor bodily shape and presence. He spoke of it as of a visible enemy; he had a special communion service which he fired off against it at brief intervals,—minute-guns in the shape of very particular ecclesiastical curses, they might be reckoned. A chronic warfare had for long been maintained between the commodore and Donald on the subject of "thorough draughts." He constantly averred, with a kirkyard wheeze, that the captain's system of ventilation would be the death of him. It was with grim satisfaction, consequently, that he felt his end approaching. His blood was on the captain's head, and he had verified, besides, the accuracy of his views,—two special sources of comfort. Day by day

Donald grew more crusty and more of a cripple. At length he was confined to his bed. For many months his assistant, Angus Riach, led a dog's life. Donald insisted on maintaining a general superintendence from his sick-bed; and a dying Nero or Caligula could not have been more imperious and implacable. Then he grew thin and worn,—a mere skinful of bones. And one night, about midnight, while the commodore (who is a bad sleeper) was sitting by his bed, he went out quite suddenly. It had been obvious, indeed, for some days, that he could not last much longer; but the closing scene, somehow, took us by surprise. They had been discussing the breeding of young setters,—Donald defending his own plan of up-bringing, and condemning that practised in a neighboring kennel, with his habitual acuteness and keenness,—when, without any warning, his sight failed him, his speech began to wander, and he lost the thread of his discourse. But he died, so to speak in the field. To the last, the old sportsman was among his dogs. "Juno, my lass, the scent dia'n'a haud to-night," were his last articulate words.

Donald's co-religionists,—he was a Reformed Antiburgher; when the Burghers left a godless establishment, which did not give sufficient prominence to the doctrine of final perseverance, they had a division among themselves on the distinction between final and ultimate, which resulted in a fierce Antiburgher secession, and the Reformed Antiburghers, who held that both the Burghers and the Antiburghers were on the road to perdition about original sin, were an offshoot from the latter body,—Donald's co-religionists buried him in their own part of the churchyard, chanting, as a part of the burial-service, the Calvinistic *Te Deum*,—the burden of which (Horace says) runs thus:—

"The mighty dome of heaven is quaking;
The round earth, like a bubble, breaking;
Before the throne the people stand
On either hand.

"The goats are cast into the fire
Forever burning higher:
But the sheep feed upon the lea
And fatten through eternity.

"With joyful hearts the elect shall raise
Perennial praise:
'Duly let us His grace extol!
He might have damned us all.'"

About a week after Donald had been laid in the churchyard, Horace and I were sitting with the commodore in the sanctum, where he keeps his birds, bulky rolls of cavendish, such as they smoke in the navy, his scanty wardrobe, his big Bible, an odd volume of Sir Walter's novels, "The Lady of the Lake," his hammock, a chest containing garden-twine, tinder, nails, needles and thread, a bowie-knife, beeswax, sweet-oil, and other odds and ends. The day was wet and dirty, and we had been smoking industriously for hours,—upon the whole silent, and devoting our minds chiefly to the contemplation of the weather. "Would you like to hear an old story?" the commodore asked us at last. "It happened lang syne; but Donald's death somehow has brought it back to my mind."

We expressed our willingness to listen, and the commodore commenced. I use his own North-country tongue where it seems to add force to the story, but it is not necessary to represent it with entire fidelity.

"Donald and I were early cronies; he was constantly about our farm-town afore I went on board the *Wasp*. He used to take me along with him when he gaed to the hills, and what I am about to relate happened on one of our sportin' trips.

"There's a great change in the country," continued the commodore, "since I mind it first. In those days we could shoot from the seashore to the Grampians, up the whole valley of the Dee, without seeing a keeper. I was only a bairn at the time, for the century was barely begun; but Donald was a strapping lad, one of the best shots, and one of the neatest legs in the country-side. His temper, however, was not to be lippened to; he could be as glum and dour as a nor'-easter when he liked. Well, we started from the lowlands one fine morning in September, meaning to be away for a week, Donald carrying an auld musket that had been 'oot' in the '45 across his shoulder, and whiles gien me a lift, when my feet gat sair, and the ground was stiffer than ordinar. We soon left the low country behind us; it was a different place from what it is now; there were only casual patches of corn and neeps, such as you see among the outlying crofts on the hillside before you get fairly among the heather; not a field was drained, and the snipe and wild-deuk were rising like laverocks among our legs. We soon got upon the muir,

however, and a fine day's sport we had ; I say 'we,' though it was Donald who filled the bag, and I only got a sittin' shot at a white hare, whiles. The first day we were content with grouse and blackcock, and we had a heavy bag by the evening, when we came to a private still in a deep glen abint Tillymaud,—weel kent to Donald. We stayed with the smugglers for the night, Donald happenin' me up in his plaid among the heather, and leaving me to look at the stars, while he himself and his smuggling friends tested the strength of the brew. It was the first time I slept in the open air, and it seemed like the beginning of a new life to me. Though September, the air was heavy and sultry, and the thunder growled and muttered a' night among the corries of Morven. Then ever and again a white flash of lightning dimly disclosed the haill scene up to the very summits of the mountains ; and just as I was fa'in' asleep, a herd of red deer, terrified by the flashes, swept past me,—like a troop of startled ghosts. Next morning we bathed in the burn which fed the still, and the bit willow wand which served me for a walking-stick got us a breakfast of splendid red trout in half an hour. I dinna believe the trout therabouts had ever seen a fly before,—at least, they rose to a rough cast of Donald's as freely as if they had been busked by Pluin or Mrs. Hogg. All day we travelled up the beautiful valley,—sometimes low down in its heart, beside the clear waters of the rapid Dee ; sometimes high up among the crags (for Donald had promised to shoot an eagle for the laird), and getting glimpses, on one hand, of the great hills at the head of the pass, on the other, of the blue sea and the yellow sand and the green woods from which we had started. Never a human soul did we meet, savin' a shepherd or a lad poaching like ourselves ; but before the sun gae down, Donald had shot a royal stag and a golden eagle, and so—the next day being the Sabbath—we fixed to bide wi' a gude-brither of Donald's, who was shepherd to the then Laird of Haddo, and had a sheiling aboon Cairnbannow. There never was a lovelier Sabbath-day ; we sat oot afore the door, the men smoking their pipes and talking over the news till it was time for kirk ; and then we started across the hill to Lumphanan, for it was the Sacramental Sabbath, and auld Doctor MacAlister was to fence the

tables, and a young lad from the King's College (the son o' a neighboring laird) was to preach his first discourse. So there was a great thrang in the kirkyard ; from every sheiling, on hillsides or glen, the folk cam' troopin' in,—stalwart lads, bonny lasses, and gray-headed patriarchs, wha minded the '45, and had been hunted by the red-coats after Culloden. It was the last communion that some of them gae to at Lumphanan ; for a hard winter followed, and there was a sair thinnin' amang the auld carles. However that might be, little was thocht of it then ; for it was a day to mak' the auld feel young, and there was a deal of daffing among the hill lads in their brown kilts, and the lasses in their tartan snoods, afore we gaed into the kirk. Oot o' a' sight the comeliest lass there was Nancy Roy. She was the lily of their valley, and as good as she was bonny. I have seen sweet faces and lithe figures since then ; but I think yet that Nancy was the very prettiest girl I ever saw in my life. They were a' proud of her, up hill and down dale ; and it used to be said that the sang which begins—

‘ Oh, Nancy's hair is yellow as gowd,
And her e'en, like the lift, are blue’—

was made for Nancy Roy. She was her very image, at least ; yellow hair, blue eyes, a saft skin, a sunny laugh, the nicest, sweetest deftest little woman, with the maist astonishin' ankles, which showed to perfection under her short coat o' shepherd tartan. But before I go on, I must tell you something further about Nancy.

“ She was the daughter of Duncan Roy, the duke's foreman at Craigdarroch. His cottage stood on the river-bank, just about a mile below the cradle. But you'll no mind the cradle ; the brig at Dalnowhinnie was biggit afore your time. Weel, the cradle was a contrivance for crossing the river ; a rope was thrown across at a deep narrow passage, and fastened to the high banks on baith sides. On this rope a wicker basket was slung, and the man who wanted to cross placed himself in this basket, and pulled himself along the rope, hand over hand. It needed a strong arm and a steady head ; for when you were half-way across, the basket swung about like the branch of a poplar, and you were fifty feet above the water, which ran there like a mill-lead. Howsomever, the country folk had been content with the in-

vention (which was worked precisely like one of Manby's rockets) from the beginning of time, and there was no other way of crossing, unless you chose to walk a good six miles to the ferry above Blackford.

" Now Nancy had lived ever since she was a bairn amang the hills, and a nicer Hieland lassie you'll no see on a summer day. But she had been in service for a half-year wi' an aunt o' her ain,—her mither's half-sister,—wha belonged to Burnness. Her husband had been a merchant-captain, and when he was drowned aff the Skerries on board the *Jolly Brothers* of Largo (which he partly owned), she just stayed on in the little house where he had left her. It stood close to the sea, so that, when the day was warm, Nancy, who was as fond as a fish o' the saut water, could be up to the waist in a jiffey. Weel, she was bathing one day with her cousin, Lisbeth Gordon, when on a sudden she was drawn into a strong current or swirl, and carried aff her feet. Baith girls skirled like scarts; but Lisbeth could not come near her cousin, and so she behoved to wade to the shore as fast as her fear and the tide and her weet petticoat wud let her. It looked very black for Nancy, for she could not swim, or at least, if she could, the tide was ower strang for her bit legs. However, as it happened, Evan Caird—he was a ship-carpenter then, a nephew of his dee'd in the kirk town in the spring—was passing to his work at the time,—perhaps he had been taking a keek at the lasses, laughing and plashing together like twa young seals,—and just as she had risen aboon the water for the last time, he got her under his oxter, and the next minute was swimming briskly to the shore. She was quite white and gash when he laid her on the sand, rubbing her hands and trying to bring her back to her senses; but he thought her, in spite of her blue lips, and the water dreepin' from her yellow hair, the very sweetest angel he had ever seen,—in the Bible or out of it. He did not get lang to look at her though; for Lisbeth had run to the house, and brought the neighbors. The auld women turned him aff just as Nancy had opened her eyes, and thanked him with a blessed smile,—turned him aff wi' a flea in his lug, as they say, for I reckon that they considered it maist inproper for a lad to bring a young lass to the shore, wi' naething on but her petticoat.

" But it would not do; for, though Nancy blushed a bit when she neist met Evan Caird, she kent weel that he had saved her from the fishes; and her heart went out in pure maiden thankfulness to bless and welcome him. He was just the lad to win a girl's fancy,—frank, free, honest, of the blue-eyed, light-haired, light-hearted Scandinavian kind. So it cam' aboot, or ever Nancy returned to Craigdarroch, she had plighted her troth to Evan; and the half of the broken sixpence which she wore neist her heart was the gift of her first lover.

" Duncan Roy who had lost his wife at little Hetty's birth, was swair to part with his daughter,—his ewe-lamb, he would call her, as he stroked her langcurls. However, like a wise man, he saw that what wud be maun be; and the upshot was that they were to be married in the hinder end of the year,—the same year it was that I first saw Nancy at Lumphanan. Shortly before this time, however, Evan had got a place in the excise, and was now a revenue officer,—for, being a smart, serviceable lad, he had been marked out by the inspector at Burnness, and was readily appointed, when a vacancy occurred, to a good and weel-paid post.

" Now, at that time—not very many years after Robbie Burns had been in the excise himself, and ye ken how he liked it—the gauger stank in the nostrils of the country-folk. Wherever you fand a mossy burn, you might tak' your Bible oath, a' still was not far off. Every man in the Hielands, gentle and simple, was a smuggler by nature or education. In the low country the gaugers had the upper hand. The smugglers had certain weel-kent roads, by which they conveyed their brew from the hills to the sea-coast. Thirty or forty Hieland ponies, each wi' twa kegs slung across its back, attended by a score of hill-men, might often be met on the roads, at orra hours, and in outlying glens; and mony a fecht took place when the excisemen happened to meet them. But few gaugers ever ventured 'aboon the pass.' It used to be said that nane, at least, 'cam' doon.' However that might be, it was certain that the trade of brewing went on briskly, and that few cared to meddle wi' them that brewed. You may believe, consequently, that there was some stir in Lumphanan kirk-yard that September Sabbath, when it was seen that Evan Caird, the gauger, had come

wi' Nancy. There was a deal of angry whispering and muttering among the lads. The glede fluttered the doos ; it was not fair, they thocht, to bring the hawk into the bowlet's nest. However, nothing unchancy came of it at the time. Neither Nancy nor Evan noticed what was said. Love is a tyrannical divinity, an absolute monarch ; whilcs, doubtless, it maks a man scent danger like a whutret, but astener it steeks his e'en. They were a handsome couple ; and Nancy looked so fond and proud of her joe that it was little wonder the red shanks glowered at the south country lad who had gathered their sweetest flower. 'Deed she was a winsome lass,' quoth the commodore, kindling at the recollection ; "her breath and her cheeks were just made of roses, you would have thought. And she was active and mettlesome as a kid,—mettlesome wi' youth and health and the pure glow of a maiden and honest love.

"But to return to Donald and myself. Donald had forgathered wi' Duncan Roy at kirk (he was an auld freen' o' Donald's), and had promised to come across in the gloaming to Craigdarroch. The elachan was five mile down the glen,—so that by lodging for the night wi' Duncan, we would be weel forrit on our return road. Weel, we went round to Donald's gudebrother's for the gun and the eagle and the horns and the ither traps ; and syne after dinner we walked down in the cool of the afternoon to Duncan's, where we fand them at supper. Donald had been in ane of his sulky humors ever since he saw Nancy and the gauger together ; not a word had he spoken on the road, except answering me wi' a snap, when I spoke to him. However, there was a deal of lauchin' and daffin' at Duncan's (for Evan was a blithe, good-humored chield, and Duncan liked his joke) till Duncan got down the big Bible for the Sabbath evening reading ; and then we gaed to bed,—for they keepit early hours in the country, lang syne,—early to bed and early to rise.

"Now you maun understand that I was only a bairn at the time—a sturdy loon, doubtless, or I could barely have tramped alongside of Donald. Donald was sent to sleep in the stable-loft among the straw,—for there was only a but and ben, as it's called,—and it was designed that I should sleep wi' Donald ; but Nancy said that it was unkind to turn a bit callant like me oot to

the rattans ; and she made me up a bed in a hole in the wa' aff her ain room, where she and little Hetty slept in one bed. I was quickly tucked into the sheets, for I was tired and stiff ; but somehow I could not sleep. It was a sultry night ; there was not a breath of wind nor a cloud stirring in the baill sky ; there had been a drouth for weeks. I could hear, through the open window, the blackcock crowing, and the salmon louping at the Black Linn, and whiles a whaup went skirling across the muir. So I tossed and turned till I was sair. At last Nancy cam' ben to her bed ; but as she was undressin', Hetty took to greetin', so she got the bairn into her lap, and sung her to sleep wi' a soft Gaelic ballad, for she had a sweet voice. While she was still singing saftly,—croonin' half to her ain thochts and half to Hetty,—I heard her name whispered outside. I kent it was Evan, for she went and stood beside the window, and they talked together for lang, murmuring the delicious murmurs of early love, and cooin' like a pair of cusey-does in the wood. Evan had orders to meet his officer at the station next morning, and he had gude thirty miles to travel during the night. They had parted ben the house, but Evan could not leave till he had seen Nancy again. In the end, when they had said 'Gude-by' for the hundredth and last time, they parted for gude, Evan stepping across the muir, and Nancy lookin' after him through the darkness till, minding whero she was, with a little start and flutter (like a tenchit rising from its eggs), and after a short, whispered prayer (for she still said her prayers aloud, as she had been tocht,—Nancy had grown a woman, and had a woman's love in her heart, but she kept some o' her bonny bairnlike ways), in which I could hear Evan's name, and a tender supplication that he might be preserved safe from all evil and harm, she slipt into the cosy nest—beside her sleeping sister."

Here the commodore paused for a moment, and then resumed.

"I think it must have been about an hour after this that I wakened with a start. I was shivering all over ; I had been roused suddenly out of a confused dream, and my wits were scattered. The moon had risen,—it was close upon the last quarter,—and it threw a ghastly and forlorn light upon the hillside, and the black clump of willows

anent the Linn. I looked up, and there, near the middle of the room, I saw Nancy,—standing, like a ghost, in her white night gear,—her long yellow hair hanging confusedly down her back. She had turned toward the window, and with one hand had pressed her hair from off her face, as if to let her listen freely. She came towards me; for, wondering and frightened, I had sat up in bed. ‘That cry,—did you hear it?’ she said; and she looked at me with a white face, and eyes which were full of a vague fear. ‘Did you hear that cry? I thought it was Evan’s voice.’ Then, seeing that I was nearly as scared as herself, she forgot her ain fear, and set herself stoutly to quiet me before she returned to bed. ‘I must have been dreaming,’ she said, blushing a bit. ‘What a goose I am, to be sure!’

“ In the end I fell into a sound sleep; and the sun was shining briskly when I opened my eyes. The room was empty, but I heard a voice close to the burn (which joined the Dee fifty yards further down) singing a blithe nursery sang. I got up, and looked out. At the burnside I saw Nancy, who was a keen housewife, tramping clothes in a tub, after the fashion of the country lasses. Hetty, wrapped in a tartan shawl, and basking and crowing in the morning sun, was lying, not far off, among the white pebbles on the bank. It was a quiet, lovely morning; the *laverocks* were singing in the lift, and all over the hills I heard the bleating of innumerable sheep; for the shepherds were bringing their flocks off to the lower pastures. Donald was not yet visible; so I scampered off to the river, carrying my clothes with me, and getting a smile from Nancy as I passed, and plunged into the clear, deep water. We were born—the doctor and I—beside the sea, and we took to the water freely: when we were the merest bairns, we could dive like ducks. I was half-way across the river, when I noticed something black whirling in a swirl. I swam near it, and managed to lay hold of a blue Glengarry bonnet,—as it proved to be. I swam to the shore, and, quickly dressing (for a boy’s toilet is quickly made), shouted to Nancy that I had caught a queer fish. She came down to where I sat,—a perfect Hebe. Her round arms were bare as well as her white feet and ankles, and she looked so nice and fresh and happy and innocent that even a boy could see that she was, as Mr. Cole-

ridge has said, ‘beautiful exceedingly.’ I think it struck me then for the first time; and putting the bonnet behind my back, I said that I would not let her have it till she gave me a kiss. ‘ You saucy bairn! ’ she said, with a bright, pleasant laugh; and then she stooped down, and, throwing her arms round me, pressed a kiss upon my cheek. It was the last time that Nancy leuch for mony a day; I doubt if ever she leuch freely again. I held up the cap in boyish triumph; in a single moment her face was as white as death. I shall never forget that look. She shivered all over for a time, and then fell with a sick cry on the ground. I raised her head. ‘ What ails you, Nancy? ’ I managed to gasp out, for that pale, despairing face had terrified me again, as it had terrified me in the moonlight. ‘ See! see! ’ she replied, pointing to the front of the cap, but replying more to her own thoughts than to my question; and there, beneath a heather-sprig, I saw the initials ‘ E. C. ’ worked in red worsted. It was Evan’s cap. She had worked the letters (so they told me afterwards) on the Saturday night, while Evan sat clashing with Duncan about the admiral’s last great victory. He was clashing wi’ Duncan, but his frank, honest blue eyes were fixed on Nancy,—as she weel kent.

“ As she could not rise, I was fain to run for help. They were soon about us,—Duncan, Donald, and the rest of them. They carried her hame, and pit her in her ain bed. For mony days she lay like one in a dream,—only at times pressing her hand upon her head with a weary moan that went to the heart. It was better for her, perhaps, that her mind gaed as it did; for she was barely in bed when ane o’ the farm-loone spied a bundle, as it seemed, floating among the water-lilies, outside a clump of rashes. He cried to us, and we ran down to the bank. It was the body of Evan Caird,—a pitiful sight! The eyes were fixed and staring, the water was dripping out of the lank brown curls, and there was a bitter scowl upon the brow and about the lips,—as if his last thought had been of vengeance, and his last word a curse. I had never seen death before; and the destroying angel had made that night a fearful piece of work wi’ Evan Caird.

“ They thought at the outset that he had fallen by mischance into the Linn; but a word of Nancy’s set them upon a different

tack. ‘The cradle !’ she had moaned more than once as they were carrying her to the house. And the rights of the matter, so far, were quickly settled. It was found that the cradle was down. One end of the rope had been frayed by the rock, and had, doubtless, given way when Evan was crossing. He had been thrown into the river, stunned by the fall, and drowned in the rapid tide. That was the story. But auld Fiscal Tamsan tell’t me lang afterwards that it was clear to his mind that Evan had not been killed by a chance shot : he was a murdered man. The rope, he said, had not given why : *it had been cut.* He examined it next morning, and he saw the marks of the knife. There were lang precognitions, as they ca’ them, and twa or three lads were clapped in jail : but there was little evidence, and they could not try them. But the Fiscal didna doubt that it was the work of the smugglers. They had fancied Evan was upon their track, and learning somehow that he was to cross the river that night, they had waited for him at the cradle. When he was swinging in the darkness, the deevils had run in, and cut the rope.”

The commodore paused at this point of his narrative to replenish his pipe, and then proceeded.

“ Donald and I gat hame neist day. The eagle was stufed ; and there he is yet, as large as life. The rest are a’ awa. Duncan lies in the kirkyard at Lumphanan. ‘But what of Nancy ?’ you ask. Well, the poor lassie’s heart was broken ; but, indeed, it’s uncommun difficult to dee of a broken heart, —especially in the Hieland air. She was a changed woman when she rose from her bed ; but she lived on. I was with the *Wasp* at Malacea, sax years afterwards, when I heard, in a letter from the doctor, that my poachin’ freen’ Donald had married Nancy Roy. A year later I heard that she was dead. It was said that she had gone oot o’ her mind, and had—shortly before her confinement—tried to cut her husband’s throat one night with his ain razor. At least, Donald escaped from the house, his hands bleeding, a gash in his cheek, and a scared look in his face. However that might be, she never recovered her wits, and dee’d in her first confinement. The puir bairn was mercifully taken with its mither : and now Donald himself has left,—the last o’ the lot.”

“ Did it never occur to you,” Horace inquired, in a meditative tone, after a pause, “ that Donald might have been in some way implicated in Caird’s death ?”

“ Wha ever put such a notion into your head ?” retorted the commodore, sharply. “ No, I had no suspicion,—at least, I never suspected him till the other day. But, shortly before his death, I went into his room. He was muttering uneasily ; and though for a bit I could make little or nothing of what he said, at last I distinctly heard the words ‘Evan Caird !’ followed by a deep sigh or moan, and some Old Testament words, which sounded like a prayer for mercy, in respect of some great evil done or suffered. Then he roused up, and recognized me. He looked so miserable that I said if he had anything upon his mind he should see the minister. But Donald was wild at the notion. ‘Hoot, na !’ he said ; ‘ the parsons are empty wind-bags—tinklin’ cymbals—not dividing the word of the Lord to edification.’ Then I said that I hoped, at least, he had repented of any ill he had done. ‘Wha speaks o’ repentin’?’ he answered, in a loud voice, his mind beginning to ramble : ‘ I want no repentance. Have we not been chosen or disownned from the creation of the world ?’ So he died, and made no sign. But when I recollect that Donald, as I have been told, was an early lover of Nancy,—rejected for Evan Caird ; that it was impossible to ascertain where he might have been during the night when the murder (if it was a murder) was done ; that his wife had either heard him confess, or otherwise come to suspect, that he had done her a grievous injury, I sometimes fancy that what you say is possible. He may have met his rival on his road to the cradle, and, yielding to a swift, devilish impulse, have hurried him into eternity. He was often sulky, as I have said : but I can mind that the neist day, as we walked down the glen, he never opened his mouth.”

“ Nonsense !” I said ; “ Donald did not look like a murderer.”

“ Why,” responded Horace, from the serene height of a protracted acquaintance with human nature, “ it’s my experience that murderers look very much like other people. We raise an imaginative barrier between the murderer and the rest of the race. But, in truth, there is no brand upon his forehead ; and I am not sure that the man who takes his

neighbor's life is necessarily worse than the man who takes his neighbor's character. But there is one point in your narrative," Horace continued, turning to the commodore, " which I do not quite follow. Was it possible that the girl could have heard the cry which we may suppose her lover uttered when he was precipitated from the cradle?"

" Well, I don't know : the cradle was not more than a mile and a half, or two miles, from the cottage, and the night was uncommin quiet. It is barely possible that she may have heard his cry ; but I think not. The cry, at least, could not have wakened her. It was another cry, I suspect, audible to the inner ear only, though connected, perhaps, by some fine law of sympathy,—some mysterious and invisible train of association,—with the actual peril of her lover."

Thus said the commodore, not knowing that our latest poet had written, or was to write,—

" Star to star vibrates light ; may soul to soul
Strike through a finer element of her own ? "

So the commodore ended his yarn ; and as " that tocsin of the soul " (in the words of my Lord Byron), the six-o'clock bell, had not yet warned us to dress, we went into the cottage drawing-room, and entreated Letty to sit down to the piano. She did so at once, while the rest of us gathered round the fire and listened quietly to the weirdlike music which, under her persuasive fingers, the instrument discoursed. I asked her afterwards to write down for me the words of one or two of the songs which I liked best ; and I think you will enjoy them nearly as much as we did,—though, unfortunately, the dying twilight, and the sweet voice, and the music of Mendelssohn (which formed the framework) cannot be put into print.

Yet if you put a certain *Liede ohne Worte* by Mendelssohn into articulate words, this, I fancy, will be something like what the song will be :—

FUNERAL MARCH FOR EVENING.

I.

Tread slowly, tread ye slowly in the train
Of Evening, O ye spirit-angels fair !
Marshal you to sweet music in the wane
Of dying day, and loose your gold-cloud hair
Across the heavens that palpitate with light !
Gather your robes around you as you go,
And move you onward, steadily and slow,
While far behind uprises silent night.

II.

Lay the purple on the mountain,
Fling the red sheet o'er the wave,
Tinge the silver-flooded fountain,
As ye follow to the grave,—
Ye are bearing a dead hero to his rest :
For the good deeds he hath done,
Since the rising of the sun,
Spread the glory, that his honor be confess.

III.

The grave is made within the western glow,
Ye follow thither, marching stately down
The golden path—then chant ye as ye go,
And wreath the crimson cloud-spray in a
crown ;
And let the wild winds raise a requiem high,
Measured and tuneful, while the throbbing
beat
Of thousands of your shining angel-feet
Keeps time unto the music till it die.

IV.

They have borne him from our sight,
They are laying him to rest,
In the passing of the light,
With his hands upon his breast ;—
Pales the purple from the mountains far away,
Faints the flush from off the sky,
Sinks the music to a sigh,—
In its farewell sweetness let us kneel and pray.

That—though the spirits of sunset marshal the pomp of evening round the grave of the hero—is solemn and subdued ; now, ere we part, a snatch of Ariel-like music :—

A SONG.

Call me over the mountains, love,
Call me, and I follow ;
Thy voice will rise o'er the purple peaks
And float o'er the misty hollow.
Into the golden sunset haze,
Into the twilight tender,
My heart will fly like a tamèd bird,
Speeding where love shall send her.
Call to me over the mountains, then,
Call to me, and I follow ;
Over the crags, and over the moors,
Into the golden hollow.

Call me over the ocean, love,
Call me, and I listen ;
Across the roll of the trackless wave
Where the moonbeams whitely glisten.
Thy voice will come across the dark
And through the day-dawn's glimmer ;
O'er-ring the sound of the lengthening swell,
O'er-float the foam-flake's shimmer.
Call to me over the ocean, then,
Call to me, and I listen ;
Here, by the side of the moony sea,
With eyes, like the waves, that glisten.

From Macmillan's Magazine.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

THE life of a most extraordinary man has recently appeared, and should be studied by all who are interested in the curiosities of literature and art.* To this generation he is nearly unknown. To his contemporaries he most frequently seemed to be a madman. Yet of this strange being—at once a poet and a painter—Wordsworth said, “There is something in his madness which interests me more than the sanity of Lord Byron and Walter Scott.” Fuseli and Flaxman declared that the time would come when his designs should be as much sought after and treasured in portfolios as those of Michael Angelo. “Blake is d— good to steal from,” said Fuseli. “And, ah! sir,” said Flaxman, “his poems are as grand as his pictures.” Who is the unknown genius that is praised so highly, and what has he done? The answer is given in two goodly volumes, to which three ardent admirers have contributed. The late Mr. Gilchrist, who distinguished himself by the production of a good biography of Etty, has traced the incidents of Blake’s life; Mr. Dante Rossetti, one of the leading pre-Raphaelite painters, has edited Blake’s poetry and criticised his style of art; and Mr. W. M. Rossetti has produced a critical catalogue of Blake’s designs. The work produced by three such able men is very interesting. Perhaps they overrate Blake’s merits, but their opinion, if exaggerated, is worth examining; and they have done really a good work in rescuing from oblivion one of the most extraordinary men of our nation.

William Blake was born in 1757, and he died in 1827. He was born, he lived, and he died in London. His threescore and ten years covered a most important, a most active, period in the history of English art and poetry; and what manner of man he was we can see at once in the earliest incident of his childhood which is known. When he had not yet entered his teens, he saw a vision. He beheld a tree at Peckham Rye all filled with angels. He told his father of the sight on

* The Life of William Blake, “Pictor Ignotus,” with Selections from his Poems and other Writings: By the late Alexander Gilchrist, author of “The Life of William Etty:” illustrated from Blake’s own works in facsimile by W. J. Linton, and in Photolithography; with a few of Blake’s original Plates. 2 vols. Macmillan & Co. 1863.

coming home, and was about to receive a flogging for the supposed lie, when his mother interfered and saved him for that once. All his life he saw such visions. “Did you ever see a fairy’s funeral, madam?” he once said, quite gravely, to a lady; “I have.” And then he described how, in the stillness of his garden, he had seen a procession of little creatures, of the size and color of green and gray grasshoppers, bearing a body laid out on a roseleaf, which they buried with songs. At this time he was an artist, and drew with wonderful truthfulness the sights which he saw in vision. He really saw what he drew; and if the vision changed its appearance, he could not go on. He once saw and drew the ghost of a flea! See the portrait of this amazing monster at page 255,—a sketch of singular vigor, which any one once seeing will never forget. As he was drawing this ghostly flea, it appeared in vision to move its mouth, and he had to take the portrait over again. Mr. Richmond, the well-known portrait-painter, was one of his admirers, and finding his invention flag during a whole fortnight, went to Blake, as was his wont, for advice. When he told Blake that his power of invention had been failing him, the strange visionary turned suddenly to Mrs. Blake and said, “It is just so with us, is it not, for weeks together when the visions forsake us? What do we do then, Kate?” “We kneel down and pray, Mr. Blake,” was the reply. He prayed for vision, and the vision came. He would insist on it, too, that no one could really draw well any imaginary scene who did not see it as a reality in vision. He was surrounded with strange sights and sounds which nobody else saw or heard. “What! when the sun rises do you not see a round disc of fire somewhat like a guinea?” he supposes some one to ask, and he answers, “Oh! no, no! I see an innumerable company of the heavenly host, crying, ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty!’ I question not my corporeal eye, any more than I would question a window concerning a sight. I look through, and not with it.”

Although this is the side of his character which first fixes our attention, Blake was, after all, not a mere visionary, but had a sharp, observing eye for external nature, and understood perfectly that no one can draw visions well unless he can first draw real things well. He drew well and easily, and he had

a quick and clear insight into character. At the age of fourteen his father proposed to bind him as an apprentice to Ryland, the engraver. "Father," he said, "I do not like the man's face ; he will live to be hanged." And twelve years afterwards Ryland actually was hanged. He was bound apprentice to Busire, the engraver, and worked hard under him till he was twenty-one years of age. Then he studied in the newly-formed Royal Academy, and began to make original designs, some like those of his friend Stothard, to illustrate books. At the same time he was cultivating poetry. When he was yet fourteen, indeed, he threw off verses of no mean merit, and thenceforward he wrote what, *for the time*, we must consider very remarkable poems, though, regarding his poetical works as a whole, we cannot share Mr. Gilchrist's surprise that Blake is little known as an English poet. For the most part his poems are wanting in form, or they are difficult to understand, or the sentiment which they convey is out of all proportion to the world of fact. We cannot without long quotations, which no one would much care to read, show the formlessness and the obscurity of his poems; but we can, in a short example, show what we mean by objecting to the disproportion between his ideas and facts :—

"A robin redbreast in a cage
Puts all heaven in a rage.
A dove-house filled with doves and pigeons
Shudders hell through all its regions;
A game-cock clipped and armed for fight
Doth the rising sun affright."

This is rather a wild way of saying that red-breasts ought not to be caged, that a dovecot is a pretty sight, and that cock-fighting is a barbarous sport. Apart from these faults, which will prevent sober critics from speaking of Blake's poems in the somewhat extravagant terms adopted by Mr. Rossetti and by Mr. Gilchrist, there is a power and an originality in his style which cannot be overlooked, especially when we remember the date to which most of the poems belong.

One of the most curious studies in criticism concerns the rise and fall of Pope's poetical ascendancy in the last century. So much has been written upon this theme that it may seem to be now exhausted; but the truth is, that we are not yet in full possession of the facts that would enable us to trace with per-

fect accuracy the movement either of flow or of ebb. In the middle of last century, we find Pope enthroned in our literature with imperial power. So far as we can trace, the first conscious or critical lapsing from his authority—the first open treason—is to be found in a work published in 1787 by a young man of twenty-two. Henry Headley, of Trinity College, Oxford, then gave to the world a book of beauties, which he entitled, "Select Beauties of Ancient English Poets, with Remarks." Among these remarks will be found a most determined protest against the influence of Pope. He tells us that the translation of Homer, timid as it was, operated like an inundation on our literature; that the consequences which have ensued from the sway of Pope have been full of harm; that "in proportion as his works were read and the dazzle of his diction admired, proselytes, who would not originally have been scribblers in verse, were gained, and the art of tagging smooth couplets, without any reference to the character of a poet, became an almost indispensable requisite in a fashionable education;" that hence arose "a spurious taste" which "reprobated and set at defiance our older masters;" and that "to cull words, vary pauses, adjust accents, diversify cadence, and by, as it were, balancing the line, make the first part of it betray the second," had become the chief accomplishment of an age whose poetical art seemed to consist entirely "of a suite of traditional imagery, hereditary similes, readiness of rhyme, and volubility of syllables." But the revolt thus openly proclaimed by the daring young critic, in 1787, had for some time been secretly fermenting, and it is common in this connection to fix upon the publication of Percy's "Reliques," in 1765, as the first distinct sign of a change. Now it is universally allowed that the most remarkable specimens in Percy, of what may be termed ballad-thinking, are of Scottish origin; and Mr. Robert Chambers, in a recent tract which has not received the attention it deserves, attempts to make good the position that these famed Scottish ballads are by no means of such ancient origin as Percy imagined; that, in fact, they were produced in the early part of last century. We have not yet examined into this question so closely as to be able to give a decisive answer to it, and we reserve to ourselves the right of hereafter

rejecting Mr. Chambers's theory ; but in the mean time we cannot help thinking that he has made out a fair case for inquiry. The great difficulty of the question depends on the nature of the evidence which has to be weighed. It turns almost wholly on the delicacies of style and other points of internal evidence, which no cautious critic will care to decide off-hand. To detect and follow out resemblances is always a very ticklish task. The resemblance which strikes us to-day we cannot see to-morrow, and it is necessary to approach the comparison many fresh times before we can quite make up our minds. In this case we start back with astonishment from the conclusion that "the grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spens" is a veritable product of Pope's own day and generation. Yet Mr. Chambers has made out a strong case in favor of that conclusion. And if in accordance with this theory it should in the end prove that some of the best ballads in Percy—those which secured for his three volumes their chief influence—were produced in Scotland at the very time when Pope was in England elaborating his style and establishing his supremacy, it will then follow that the seeds of the revolt against the English poet were being sown at the very same time when his authority began to be planted in the hearts of the people. Parallel with the movement of poetry in England there began a movement of poetry in Scotland. Nothing could be more splendid or self-asserting than the beginnings of the former ; nothing more humble and retiring than the beginnings of the latter. But ere long the influence of the unpretending crept into the domain of pretentious song, grew there into favor, at length overthrew the giant, and great was the downfall.

Now Blake asserted his originality at a time when it was an extraordinary merit to do so,—when as yet the ballad style which Percy favored had not thoroughly told upon the public ear. Blake was eight years of age when, in 1765 (Mr. Gilchrist is wrong in the date 1760), Percy published his ballads, and he began to write in his eleventh year. His poems show a remarkable precocity that does not suffer by comparison with the similar precocity of Chatterton, who was but four years ahead of him in age. By the year 1770, Chatterton had done his work and died at the age of seventeen. His younger com-

peer had begun to compose two years before, and had produced some strains which, for his age, are quite wonderful. The following piece was written certainly before the boy was fourteen, and shows a rare precocity :—

" How sweet I roamed from field to field,
And tasted all the summer's pride,
Till I the prince of love beheld,
Who in the sunny beams did glide !

" He showed me lilies for my hair,
And blushing roses for my brow ;
He led me through his gardens fair,
Where all his golden pleasures grow.

" With sweet May-dews my wings were wet,
And Phœbus fired my vocal rage ;
He caught me in his silken net,
And shut me in his golden cage.

" He loves to sit and hear me sing,
Then, laughing, sports and plays with me ;
Then stretches out my golden wing,
And mocks my loss of liberty."

To our thinking the finest verses penned by Blake are those addressed to a tiger ; and whoever will read them, remembering the sort of style which was in vogue at the time of their composition, will have no difficulty in detecting in them the notes of a man of true genius. If this be madness, it is that species of it to which all genius is said to be near akin :—

" Tiger, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Framed thy fearful symmetry ?

" In what distant deeps or skies
Burned that fire within thine eyes ?
On what wings dared he aspire ?
What the hand dared seize the fire ?

" And what shoulder and what art
Could twist the sinews of thy heart ?
When thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand formed thy dread feet ?

" What the hammer, what the chain,
Knit thy strength and forged thy brain ?
What the anvil ? what dread grasp
Dared thy deadly terrors clasp ?

" When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did he smile his work to see ?
Did he who made the lamb make thee ?"

Blake, we say, never surpassed these verses, and it is curious that though here we have the true sublime, and though with his pencil he could at any time reach the sublime, yet the more ambitious efforts of his pen are usually the least successful. Some-

times—we must say it, with all deference to the really subtle criticism of Mr. Dante Rossetti—he is quite unintelligible : if he is not unintelligible, then he is either enigmatical, or he says common things with a disproportionate ponderosity, not of words, but of images. We gave some examples from the passage in which Blake tells us that a cock-fight “ doth the rising sun affright.” Here is more in the same style of disproportionate grandeur :—

“ Kill not the moth nor butterfly,
For the last judgment draweth nigh :
The beggar’s dog and widow’s cat,
Feed them, and thou shalt grow fat ;
Every tear from every eye
Becomes a babe in eternity ;
The bleat, the bark, bellow and roar,
Are waves that beat on heaven’s shore.”

It is when he turns from the sublime and the difficult to the simple and easy that he shows to best advantage. Witness the following bit of simplicity :—

“ Piping down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he, laughing, said to me,—
“ ‘ Pipe a song about a lamb ! ’
‘ So I piped with merry cheer.
‘ Piper, pipe that song again ; ’
‘ So I piped : he wept to hear.
“ ‘ Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe ;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer ! ’
So I sung the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.
“ ‘ Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book, that all may read.’
So he vanished from my sight,
And I plucked a hollow reed,
“ And I made a rural pen,
And I stained the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.”

Blake was peculiar in his mode of publication. He *engraved* his poems, he surrounded each page with drawings to illustrate the text, and he carefully colored these drawings by hand. His illustrative designs, whether mixed up with the text or drawn on a separate page, are of various degrees of merit and of interest. In every design there is evident the perfect ease of a master. There is no doubt that he could draw well, but frequently he chose to draw impossibilities,—heads and legs in impossible attitudes, muscles developed beyond all possible tension. In this he was supposed to resemble Michael

Angelo ; but the great Italian, if he strained to the utmost degree the appearance of muscular action, never represented actions which the muscles were incapable of performing. Blake often outdid nature in this way. Sometimes, too, he seemed to have no idea of what composition is. The first glance at many of his designs is so far from exciting expectation of any good thing that it is bewildering. The details of the picture are tossed about in hopeless confusion, which it takes some little time to understand. Yet, notwithstanding these defects, there is scarcely a drawing of Blake’s in which close study does not detect rare beauties and suggestions. He was wonderfully suggestive, and it is not without reason that the authors and editors of the present biography attribute to Blake’s influence much that is peculiarly impressive in the style both of Flaxman and Stothard. His angels are among the finest things we have ever seen, and his treatment of angelic forms is famous for originality. His sense of color, too, is most remarkable, and receives high praise from a colorist, Mr. Dante Rossetti, than whom no living painter is better able to judge. The painters who are known among us as pre-Raphaelites are most excellent of all in their sense of color, and Blake may be regarded as the herald and forerunner of the pre-Raphaelite system of color, “ in which tints laid on side by side, each in its utmost force, are made by masterly treatment to produce a startling and novel effect of truth.” Mr. Rossetti admits, however, that now and then an unaccountable perversity may be apparent in Blake’s color, as when a “ tiger is painted in fantastic streaks of red, green, blue, and yellow, while a tree stem at his side tantalizingly supplies the tint which one might venture to think his due, and is perfect tiger-color ! ” A mistake of this kind in color is more easily detected than one of form, but it is to impossibilities of drawing not less wonderful than the impossibility of coloring a tiger blue and green that we ventured to refer when just now speaking of the supposed resemblance of his style to that of Michael Angelo. Neither for coloring nor for drawing, however, should Blake be judged by only a few of his works. Much of his art looks like mere nightmare, and oppresses one sometimes with the oppressive hideousness, sometimes with the oppressive loveliness, of nightmare. To understand the man

well, he ought to be studied as a whole, and his admirers ought to make some attempt to bring his innumerable works together. Then we should see the enormous energy of the man ; his prodigious power of invention ; how grand and how graceful he could be in design ; how spiritual and poetical were all his thoughts and views of life. He is best known by his illustrations to Blair's "grave;" Grave but the volumes of colored designs are even more interesting. Some of these will be found in the print-room of the British Museum. But still finer examples belong to the collections of Lord Houghton and Captain Butts. In the possession of Captain Butts are three works which we have never seen ; but Mr. William Rossetti is a competent judge ; we accept his opinion of them without misgiving, and we shall quote that opinion as a remarkable testimony to the wonder-working faculty of Blake's pencil. Mr. Rossetti has made a descriptive catalogue of every one of Blake's works of which he could find a trace,—no matter how slight ; and the three works to which we refer bear in his catalogue respectively the numbers 18, 44, and 54. Here is what Mr. Rossetti says :—

"ELOHIM CREATING ADAM."

"The Creator is an amazingly grand figure, worthy of a primeval imagination or intuition. He is struggling, as it were, above Adam, who lies distended on the ground, a serpent twined around one leg. The color has a terrible power in it; and the entire design is truly a mighty one,—perhaps on the whole the greatest monument extant of Blake's genius.

"THE SACRIFICE OF JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER."

"The loveliness and pathos of innocent girlhood could not be more gloriously expressed than in this figure of the fair young creature, perfectly naked and rose-chapleted, kneeling upon a lofty altar, full-fronting the spectator. Swathes of rushes for burning are behind her : at either side, her tambourine and lyre. Two maidens stand sorrowfully at each angle of the altar. Jephthah kneels in front, his back turned, his arms wide-spread, invoking the divine sanction upon the tremendous deed. To right and to left, clouds, here lowering in brown, there blue, droop like heavy tolls of curtain. This ranks amongst Blake's noblest designs.

"FIRE."

"Blake, the supreme painter of fire, in this his typical picture of fire, is at his greatest ;

perhaps it is not in the power of art to transcend this treatment of the subject in its essential features. The water-color is unusually complete in execution. The conflagration, horrid in glare, horrid in gloom, fills the background ; its jewel-like cones surge up amid conical forms of buildings ('Langham Church steeples,' they may be called, as in No. 151). In front, an old man receives from two youths a box and a bundle which they have recovered ; two mothers and several children crouch and shudder, overwhelmed ; other figures behind are running about, bewildered what to do next."

Blake was not a practical man, and, very much owing to his impracticability, had to struggle all his life with poverty and neglect, notwithstanding his genius. He was greatly beloved by his friends, but he had queer notions ; he was apt to quarrel, and the subjects which he chose for the exhibition of his art were not likely to allure the public of his day. The title of one of his pictures was, "A spirit vaulting from a cloud to turn and wind a fiery Pegasus. The horse of intellect is leaping from the cliffs of memory and reasoning ; it is a barren rock ; it is also called the barren waste of Locke and Newton." Is anybody likely to be attracted by such a title ? Another picture is entitled, "The spiritual form of Nelson guiding Leviathan, in whose wreathings are enfolded the nations of the earth." The companion picture to this is described as "The spiritual form of Pitt guiding Behe-moth : he is that angel who, pleased to perform the Almighty's orders, rides on the whirlwind, directing the storms of war : he is ordering the reaper to reap the vine of the earth, and the ploughman to plough up the cities and towers." It is in such titles as these, and in some parts of the artist's conduct, that the indications of insanity are recognized. For conduct, what should we say of the man who would take his little back garden in this grimy metropolis for the Garden of Eden, and, to the horror of all his neighbors, might be seen in the costume of our first parents sauntering about it, his wife bearing him company ? Mr. Butts called one day upon Blake, and found him with his wife in the summer-house, all innocent of clothing. "Come in," cried Blake ; "it's only Adam and Eve, you know." Husband and wife had been reciting passages from the "Paradise Lost," and, to enter

more fully into the spirit of the poet's verse, they had dressed, or rather undressed, for their parts. Blake had a great opinion of the gymnosopists, and would insist on the virtues of nakedness. Nor was he alone in his views. He got his wife to accept them undoubtingly; and we are told of a family in the upper ranks of society, contemporary with Blake, though unknown to him, who had embraced the theory of "philosophical nakedness." Believing in the speedy coming of a golden age similar to the pristine state of innocence, the elders in this family taught the children to run naked about the house for a few hours every day, and in this condition the little innocents would run and open the door to Shelley. Their mother followed the same practice more privately, locking herself in her room; but she declared to her friends that the habit of going about every day for a time in a state of nudity did her much moral good. "She felt the better for it,—so innocent during the rest of the day."

It will be readily understood that the man who could thus defy public opinion had but a low opinion of his contemporaries, and had a very high opinion of himself. He had a great contempt for many men whom the world has consented to hold in high estimation. Stothard, his friend, he could speak of as a fool; he could also accuse him of theft, —of stealing his ideas. Having addressed his friend Flaxman once in these terms,— "You, oh, dear Flaxman, are a sublime archangel,—my friend and companion from eternity. In the divine bosom is our dwelling-place," he could turn upon him at another time and call him a blockhead. This, however, was but tit for tat. He was under the impression that Flaxman had called him a madman, and so he retaliated in the couplet—

"I mock thee not, though I by thee am mocked:
Thou call'st me madman, but I call thee block-head."

When he wanted to say a thing, he said it in no mincing terms. Thus he observed, "They say there is no straight line in nature. *This is a lie.*" And so he thought nothing of calling men fools and blockheads, —even his friends. It was in this way, as we have seen, that he hit Flaxman and Stothard, both his friends; and so also he flew at another friend. Hayley had been very kind

to him, and he addressed Hayley in the following epigram:—

"Thy friendship oft has made my heart to ache;
Do be my enemy for friendship's sake."

He said that Rembrandt, Correggio, and Rubens were manifest fools. Lord Bacon he described as the little Bacon,—a fool, a liar, a villain, an atheist. He winds up his opinion with the assertion, "He is like Sir Joshua, full of self-contradiction and knavery." In another place he says, "Reynolds and Gainsborough blotted and blurred one against the other, and divided all the English world between them. Fuseli indignant almost hid himself. *I am hid.*" Speaking of Rubens and Reynolds together, he says, "Can I speak with too great contempt of such contemptible fellows? If all the princes in Europe were to patronize such blockheads, I, William Blake, a mental prince, would decollate and hang their souls as guilty of mental high treason." He had an inordinate opinion of himself. He despised the flesh color of Titian, Correggio, and Rubens, but said of himself that he defied competition in coloring. On another occasion he wrote, "I do not pretend to paint better than Raphael or Michael Angelo or Giulio Romano, or Albert Dürer, but I do pretend to paint finer than Rubens or Correggio, or Rembrandt or Titian." On yet another occasion he said, "I know and understand and can assuredly affirm that the works I have done for you are equal to the Caracci or Raphael, and I am now some years older than Raphael was when he died." Although it is not pleasant to read or hear opinions of this sort, let it not be supposed that he who held them was a cantankerous, hateful being. He was only a visionary, and, with all his inordinate self-admiration and contempt for others, the friends who came much into contact with him found in him, and had a hearty love for, a very gentle, simple-minded man.

Before we conclude, we must say a word or two about Blake's prose writings. They display all his characteristics,—force, truth, wrongness, oddity, earnestness. But his remarks are always suggestive, and sometimes very original. "If the fool would persist in his folly, he would become wise." This was one of his favorite maxims, and it is sufficiently suggestive. Here, again, is a clear, incisive remark: "Names alter, things never

alter. I have known multitudes of those who would have been monks in the age of monachery, and are deists in this deistical age." Then, for oddity, look at this: "Moral virtues do not exist; they are allegories and dissimulations. But time and space are real beings, a male and a female. Time is a man, Space is a woman, and her masculine portion is Death." We do not ask whether this be true or false. We ask what does it mean? Turning a few pages we come upon a passage which has a clear meaning, though a heretical one. "The fool shall not enter into heaven, let him be ever so holy; holiness is not the price of entrance into heaven." He had a great horror of stupidity, and, like Thomas Carlyle, seemed to regard it as the unpardonable sin. Speaking of the stupidity of the church, he says, "The modern church crucifies Christ with the head downwards." He talks about heaven and hell as if he had been there, and knew all about them. "In hell," he says, "all is self-righteousness; there is no such thing there as forgiveness of sin." So of the angels he observes, "It is not because angels are holier than men or devils that makes them angels, but because they do not expect holiness from one another, but from God only." Next we come upon a sentence which will strike the women with consternation: "In eternity woman is the emanation of man; she has no will of her own; there is no such thing in eternity as a female will." In that case, however, eternity must be very different from time. Blake probably took his notion of eternity from Mrs. Blake's unvarying acquiescence in his whims. He was in glory when he could get people to agree with him. In general, he could not get people to agree with him. He found himself sadly out of joint with the time, and in most of what he did there is an evident sense of pain. Ever and anon he seemed to be oppressed with nightmare. What we mean by nightmare is a vision of this kind: He imagines himself descending into an infinite abyss, fiery and smoky. In the far distance the sun, though shining, is black, and round it are fiery tracks, on which revolve vast spiders, crawling after their prey. Their prey are terrific shapes of animals sprung from corruption, the air being full of them and apparently composed of them. And when Blake, de-

scending into this horrible abyss, inquired where was to be his eternal lot, he was told, "Between the black and the white spiders."

Altogether, this biography of a man who, though continually wrong, was never weak, is one of the most curious studies of human life that we have ever come across; and we are grateful to Mr. Gilechrist and to the Messrs. Rossetti for enabling us to become better acquainted with Blake. In saying so much, however, it is not necessary that we should share the opinion of Mr. Dante Rossetti and his friends that the world is unjust to its great men. If Blake was a great man, and yet was not appreciated in his generation, it is not necessary to blame the world. The blame lies generally in the artist himself, and we are amazed to read the list of great unknowns whom Mr. Dante Rossetti has discovered. It is a list which fills us with a profound sense of our living in a world that is choke full of inglorious Miltons and guiltless Cromwells. Mr. Dante Rossetti is less known to the public than he ought to be. He has never exhibited his pictures, and he is known to the world chiefly through his least important works. It is no secret, however, that in the opinion of a large circle of friends, well able to judge, he is regarded as a man of extraordinary power, of rare accomplishment, and certain to take a foremost place in the art records of our time. But even from such a man we refuse to accept, as applied to Blake, the epithets "incomparable," "unparalleled," and the rest. Blake was a mighty being, but he was great as a saurian, or a mammoth that has little felt relation to the time in which he lived. We are interested in him with an intense interest, but it is the sort of interest we should feel in seeing one of the vast creatures of a prior epoch of the world suddenly come to live among us. We recognize his greatness, we wonder at the strength of his thews and the weight of his stride; but we do not wonder that Behemoth is misplaced in this present world, and we do not believe that, though his form is unwonted, one can fairly speak of it as incomparable. Our pre-Raphaelite friends are fond of superlatives, and their style would be improved if they learned to keep ever at hand a little pepper-box full of "buts" and "ifs" and "perhapses" with which to sprinkle their pages.

CHAPTER IX.

THE NEW SPORT.

"Sire," I replied, "joys prove cloudlets,
Men are the merest Ixions."
Here the king whistled aloud, "Let's
Heighho, go look at our lions!"
Such are the sorrowful chances
If you talk fine to King Francis."

R. BROWNING.

THE day after Rachel's adventure with Don, a card came into the drawing-room, and therewith a message that the gentleman had availed himself of Mrs. Curtis's kind permission and was sketching the Spinster's Needles, two sharp points of red rock that stood out in the sea at the end of the peninsula, and were specially appropriated by Rachel and Grace.

The card was written, not engraved, the name "Rd. R. H. C. L. Mauleverer;" and a discussion ensued whether the first letters stood for Richard or for Reverend, and if he could be unconscionable enough to have five initials. The sisters had some business to transact at Villars's, the Avonmouth deposit of literature and stationery, which was in the hands of a somewhat aspiring genius, who edited the weekly paper, and respected Miss Rachel Curtis in proportion to the number of periodicals she took in, and the abstruseness of the publications she inquired after. The paper in its Saturday's dampness lay fresh on the counter, and glancing at the new arrivals, Grace had the desired opportunity of pointing to Mr. Mauleverer's name, and asking when he had come. About a week since, said the obliging Mr. Villars; he appeared to be a gentleman of highly literary and artistic tastes, a philanthropist; indeed, Mr. Villars understood him to be a clerical gentleman who had opinions—

"Oh, Rachel, I am very sorry," said Grace.

"Sorry! What for?"

"Why, you and mamma seemed quite inclined to like him."

"Well, and what have we heard?"

"Not much that is rational, certainly," said Grace, smiling; "but we know what was meant."

"Granting that we do, what is proved against him? No, I will not say proved, but alleged. He is one of the many who have thought for themselves upon the perplexing problems of faith and practice, and has been sincere, uncompromising, self-sacrificing, in avowing that his mind is still in that state of

solution in which all earnest and original minds must be ere the crystallizing process sets in. Observe, Grace, I am not saying for an instant that he is in the right. All I do say is, that when depth of thought and candor have brought misfortune upon a man, it is ungenerous, therefore, to treat him as if he had the leprosy."

"Indeed, Rachel, I think you have made more out of his opinions than I did."

"I was only arguing on your construction of his opinions."

"Take care!"—For they were at this moment reaching a gate of Myrtlewood, and the sound of hoofs came close behind them. They were those of the very handsome chestnut ridden by Alexander Keith, who jumped off his horse with more alacrity than usual as they were opening the gate for him, and holding out his hand, eagerly said,—

"Then I conclude there is nothing the matter?"

"Nothing at all," said Grace. "What did you hear?"

"Only a little drowning, and a compound fracture or two," said he, relapsing into his languid ease as he gave his bridle to a groom, and walked with them toward the house.

"There, how very annoying!" exclaimed Rachel, "though, of course, the smallest adventure does travel."

"I may venture to hope that neither are you drowned, nor my sister's leg broken, nor a celebrated professor and essayist 'in a high fever wi' pulling any of you out of the sea."

"There, Grace," exclaimed Rachel; "I told you he was something distinguished."

"My dear Rachel, if his celebrity be in proportion to the rest of the story."

"Then there really was a rescue?" exclaimed Captain Keith, now with much more genuine anxiety; and Rachel, recollecting her desire that the right version should have the precedence, quickly answered, "There was no danger, only Don slipped down into that curved cove where we walked one day with the boys. I went down after him, but he had broken his leg. I could not get up with him in my arms, and Bessie called some one to help me."

"And why could not Bessie help you herself?"

"Oh, strangers can never climb on our slippery rocks as we can."

"Moreover, it would have spoiled the predicament," muttered the brother to himself; then turning round with a smile, "And is the child behaving herself?"

Grace and Rachel answered in an eager duet how she was charming every one, so helpful, so kind, so everything.

"Ah!" he said, with real satisfaction apparent in the eyes that were so pleasant when open wide enough to be visible, "I knew she always did better when I was not there."

They were by this time entering the hall, which, in the confident fashion of the seaside, stood open; and at the moment Fanny came tripping down-stairs with her dress looped up, and a shady hat on her head, looking fearfully girlish, thought her cousins, though her attire was still rigidly black.

"Oh, I am so glad to see you! Don is so much better, Rachel, and Conrade wants to thank you. He went up yesterday, and was so sorry you were out. Might it not have been dreadful, Alick? I have been so wanting to tell you how very delightful that dear sister of yours is! All the boys are distracted about her. Come out, please. She has been teaching the boys such a delightful game; so much nicer than cricket, for I can play with them!"

Alick and Rachel could not but exchange a glance, and at the same moment, emerging through the screen or shrubs on the lawn, Bessie Keith, Conrade, Francis, and Leoline were seen, each with a mallet in hand and a gay ball in readiness to be impelled through the hoops that beset the lawn.

"And you really are learning croquet!" exclaimed innocent Grace; "well, it makes a beautiful ground."

"Croquet!" exclaimed poor Lady Temple, with startled eyes; "you don't really mean that it is croquet! Oh, Bessie, Bessie!"

"Ah! I didn't mean you to have come so soon," said the much-amused Bessie, as she gave her hand in greeting. "I meant the prejudice to be first conquered. See, dear Lady Temple, I'm not ashamed; this whitish brown mustache is going to kiss me nevertheless and notwithstanding."

And so it certainly did, and smiled into the bargain, while the boys came clamoring up, and after thanks for Don's preservation, began loudly to beg mamma would come, they

could not make up their sides without her; but mamma was distressed and unhappy.

"Not now, my dears,—I must—I must. Indeed, I did not know."

"Now, Alick, I trust to your generosity," said Bessie, finding that they must be pacified. "Coming, Con—come, Grace, come and convince Lady Temple that the pastime is not too wicked for you."

"Indeed, Alick," Lady Temple was saying. "I am very sorry, I won't allow it one moment if you think it is objectionable."

"But I don't," said Alick, smiling. "Far from it. It is a capital game for you and your boys."

"I thought—I thought you disapproved and could not bear it," said Lady Temple, wondering and wistful.

"Can't bear is not disapproved. Indeed," seeing that gentle earnest alone could console her, "there is no harm in the game itself. It is a wholly personal distaste, arising from my having been bored with it when I was ill and out of spirits."

"But is not there something about it in *Punch*?" she still asked, so anxiously that it was impossible not to smile; but there was not a particle of that subdued mockery that was often so perplexing in him, as he replied, "Certainly there is about its abuse as an engine for flirtation, which, to tell you the truth, was what sickened me with the sight at Littleworthy; but that is not the line Con and Francie will take just yet. Why, my uncle is specially addicted to listening to croquet, and knows by the step and sound how each player is getting on, till he is quite an oracle in disputed hits."

"So Bessie told me," said Fanny, still feeling that she had been taken in and the brother unkindly used; "but I can't think how she could, when you don't like it."

"Nobody is bound to respect foolish prejudices," said Alick, still quite in earnest. "It would have been very absurd not to introduce it."

"Come, Alick," said Bessie, advancing, "have you absolved her, and may we begin? Would it not be a generous act of amnesty if all the present company united in a match?"

"Too many," said Alick; "odd numbers. I shall go down and call on Miss Williams. May I come back, Lady Temple, and have a holiday from the mess?"

"I shall be very glad; only I am afraid there is no dinner."

"So much the better. Only let me see you begin, or I shall never dare to express an opinion for the future."

"Mamma, do pray, pray begin; the afternoon is wasting like nothing!" cried Conrade of the much-tried patience. "And, Aunt Rachel," he added, in his magnanimity, "you shall be my partner, and I'll teach you."

"Thank you, Conrade, but I can't; I promised to be at home at four," said Rachel, who had all this time been watching with curious interest which influence would prevail,—whether Alick would play for Fanny's sake, or Fanny abstain for Alick's sake. She was best satisfied as it was, but she had still to parry Bessie Keith's persuasive determination. Why should she go home; it certainly was to inspect the sketches of the landscape-painter. "You heard, Alick, of the interesting individual who acted the part of Rachel's preserver?" she added.

The very force of Rachel's resolution not to be put out of countenance served to cover her with the most uncomfortable blushes, all the more at the thought of her own unlucky exclamation. "I came here," said Alick, coolly, "to assist in recovering the beloved remains from a watery grave;" and then, as Bessie insisted on hearing the Avonchester version, he gave it; while Grace added the intelligence that he was a clergyman, sinking the opinions, as too vague to be mentioned even had not the company been too flighty for a subject she thought serious and painful. "And he is at this moment sketching the Spinster's Needles!" said Bessie. "Well, I am consoled. With all your resolve to flatten down an adventure, fate is too strong for you. Something *will* come of it. Is not the very resolve that it shall not be an adventure a token?"

"If any one should wish to forget it, it is you, I think, Bessie," said Alick. "Your admirable sagacity seems to have been at fault. I thought you prided yourself on your climbing."

"Up a slippery perpendicular"—

"I know the place," he gravely answered.

"Well," exclaimed Bessie, recovering herself, "I am not a mermaid nor even a dear gazelle, and, in my humble opinion, there was far more grace in preventing her-

ism from being 'unwept, unnoticed, and unsung,' than in perilling my own neck, craning down and strangling the miserable beast, by pulling him up by the scruff of his neck! What an introduction would have been lost!"

"If you are going to play, Bessie," said her brother, "it would be kind to take pity upon those boys."

"One achievement is mine," she said, dancing away backwards, her bright eyes beaming with saucy merriment,—"the great Alexander has bidden me to croquet."

"I am afraid," said her brother, turning to Rachel as she departed, "that it was all her fault. Pray be patient with her; she has had many disadvantages."

His incomprehensible irony had so often perplexed Rachel that she did not know whether his serious apologetic tone was making game of her annoyance, and she answered not very graciously, "Oh, never mind, it did not signify." And at the same time came another urgent entreaty from the boys that the two "aunts" would join the game, Conrade evidently considering that partnership with him would seal the forgiveness Aunt Rachel had won by the rescue of Don.

Grace readily yielded, but Rachel pleaded her engagement; and when the incorrigible Bessie declared that they perfectly understood that nothing could compete with the sketch of the Spinster's Needles, she answered, "I promised to write a letter for my mother on business before post-time. The Burnaby bargain," she explained, to add further conviction.

"A business-like transaction indeed!" exclaimed Bessie, much diverted with the name.

"Only a bit of land in trust for apprenticesing poor children," said Rachel. "It was left by a Curtis many generations ago, in trust to the rector of the parish and the lord of the manor; and poor Mr. Linton is so entirely effete, that it is virtually in our hands. It is one of the vexations of my life that more good cannot be done with it; for the fees are too small for superior tradespeople, and we can only bind them to the misery of lacemaking. The system belongs to a worn-out state of things."

The word system in Rachel's mouth was quite sufficient to send Bessie to her croquet, and the poor boys were at length rewarded

for their unusual patience. Their mother had been enduring almost as much as they did in her dislike to see them tantalized, and she now threw herself into the game with a relish that proved that as yet, at least, Conrade's approbation was more to her than Captain Keith's. It was very pretty to see her so pleased with her instructions, so eager about her own game, and yet so delighted with every hit of her boys; while Bessie was an admirable general, playing everybody's game as well as her own, and with such life and spirit, such readiness and good nature, that a far duller sport would have been delicious under her management.

"Poor Alick," said she, meeting him when he again strolled into the garden, while the boys were collecting the mallets and balls; "he did think he had one lawn in the world undefiled by those horrible hoops!" then as she met his smile of amusement and pardon, "but it was so exactly what they wanted here. It is so good for Lady Temple and her boys to have something they can do together."

The pleased affectionate smile was gone.

"I object to nothing but its being for her good," he said, gravely.

"But now, does not it make her very happy, and suit her excellently?"

"Maybe so, but that is not the reason you introduced it."

"You have a shocking habit of driving one up into corners, Alick; but it shall be purely, purely for my own selfish delight," and she clasped her hands in so droll an affectation of remorse that the muscles round his eyes quivered with diversion, though the hair on his lip veiled what the corners of his mouth were about; "if only," she proceeded, "you won't let it banish you. You must come over to take care of this wicked little sister, or who knows what may be the consequences!"

"I kept away partly because I was busy, and partly because I believe you are such a little ape as always to behave worse when you have the semblance of a keeper," he said, with his arm fondly on her shoulder as they walked.

"And in the mean time fell out the adventure of the distinguished essayist."

"I am afraid," he returned, "that was a gratuitous piece of mischief, particularly annoying to so serious and thoughtful a person as Miss Rachel Curtis."

"Jealousy!" exclaimed Bessie in an ecstatic tone. "You see what you lost by not trusting me to behave myself under the provocation of your presence."

"What! the pleasure of boxing your ears for a coward!"

"Of seizing the happy opening! I am very much afraid for you now, Alick," she proceeded with mock gravity. "What hope can a poor Captain of Highlanders, even if he does happen to be a wounded hero or two, have against a distinguished essayist and landscape painter? If it were a common case, indeed; but where Wisdom herself is concerned"—

"Military frivolity cannot hope," returned Alick, with a shake of the head, and a calm, matter-of-fact acquiescent tone.

"Ah! poor Alick," pursued his sister, "you always were a discreet youth; but to be connected with such a union of learning, social science, and homeopathy, soared beyond my utmost ambition. I suppose the wedding tour—supposing the happy event to take place—will be through a series of model schools and hospitals, ending in Hanwell."

"No," said Alick, equally coolly, "to the Dutch reformatory, and the Swiss cretin asylum."

She was exceedingly tickled at his readiness, and proceeded in a pretended sentimental tone, "I am glad you have revealed the secrets of your breast. I saw there was a powerful attraction and that you were no longer your own, but my views were humbler. I thought the profound respect with which you breathed the name of Avonmouth, was due to the revival of the old predilection for our sweet little"—

"Hush, Bessie," said her brother, roused for the first time into sternness, "this is more than nonsense. One word more of this, and you will cut me off from my greatest rest and pleasure."

"From the lawn where croquet waits his approbation," was on Bessie's tongue; but she did not say it. There were moments when she stood in fear of her brother. He paused, and as if perceiving that his vehemence was in itself suspicious, added, "Remember, I never met her from seven years old till after her marriage; she has been the kindest of friends in right of our father's old friendship. You know how her mother nursed me, and

the sister she was to me. And, Bessie, if your selfishness—I wish I could call it thoughtlessness—involves her innocent simplicity in any scrape, derogatory to what is becoming her situation, I shall find it very hard to forgive you, and harder still to forgive myself for letting you come here."

Bessie pouted for a moment, but her sweetness and good-humor were never far away. "There, you *have* given your wicked little sister a screech," she said, looking insinuatingly up at him. "Just as if I did not think her a darling, and would for the world do anything to spoil her. Have not I been leading the most exemplary life, talking systems and visiting cottages with Rachel and playing with the boys, and singing with the clergyman; and here I am pounced on, as if I were come to be the serpent in this anti-croquet paradise."

"Only a warning, Bessie."

"You'll be better now you have had it out. I've seen you suppressing it all this time, for fear of frightening me away."

Every one knows how the afternoon croquet match on the Myrtlewood Lawn became an institution, though with some variation in the observers thereof, owing to the exigencies of calls, rides, and Ermine Williams's drive, which Lady Temple took care should happen at least twice a week. The most constant votaries of the mallet and hoop were, of course, the two elder boys, the next pair being distant worshippers only now and then admitted by special favor; but the ardor of their mother even exceeded that of Bessie Keith, and it was always a disappointment to her if she were prevented from playing. Grace and Alison Williams frequently took their share with enjoyment, though not with the same devotion; and visitors, civil and military, also often did their part, but the most fervent of all these was Mr. Touchett. Ever since that call of his, when, after long impatience of his shy jerks of conversation and incapacity of taking leave, Miss Keith had exclaimed, "Did you ever play at croquet? Do come, and we will teach you," he had been its most assiduous student. The first instructions led to an appointment for more, one contest to another, and the curate was becoming almost as regular a croquet player as Conrade himself, not conversing much, but sure to be in his place, and showing a dexterity and precision that al-

ways made Lady Temple pleased to have him on her side, and exclaim with delight at his hits as a public benefit to the cause, or thank him with real gratitude when he croquetted ber or one of her sons out of a difficulty.

Indeed, that little lawn at Myrtlewood was a battle-field, of which Alison used to carry her sister amusing and characteristic sketches. The two leading players were Miss Keith and Mr. Touchett, who alone had any idea of tactics; but what she did by intuition, sleight of hand, or experience, he effected by calculation and generalship, and even when Conrade claimed the command of his own side, the suggestions of the curate really guided the party. Conrade was a sort of Murat on the croquet-field, bold, dashing, often making wonderful hits, but uncertain, and only gradually learning to act in combination. Alison was a sure-handed, skilful hitter, but did not aspire to leadership. Mamma tried to do whatever her boys commanded, and often did it by a sort of dainty dexterity, when her exultation was a very pretty sight; nor was Grace's ladylike skill contemptible, but having Francis as an ally was like giving a castle; and he was always placed on the other side from Conrade, as it was quite certain that he would do the very reverse of whatever his brother advised. Now and then invitations were given for Rose Williams to join the game, but her aunts never accepted them. Ermine had long ago made up her mind against intimacies between her niece and any pupils of Alison's, sure that though starts of pleasure might result, they would be at the cost of ruffling and, perhaps, perturbing the child's even stream of happiness,—even girl-friendships might have been of doubtful effect where circumstances were so unequal; but Lady Temple's household of boys appeared to Ermine by no means a desirable sphere for her child to be either teased or courted in. Violetta, Colinette, and Augustus were safer comrades, and Rose continued to find them sufficient, varied with the rare delight of now and then sharing her aunt's drive, and brightened by many a kind message in Colonel Keith's letters to her aunt, nay, occasionally a small letter to herself, or an enclosure of some pretty photograph for her much-loved scrap book, or some article for Colinette's use, sometimes even a new book! She was never forgotten in his letters, and Ermine smiled

her strange pensive smile of amusement at his wooing of the unconscious Rose.

CHAPTER X.

THE PHILANTHROPIST.

" Scorn not the smallness of daily endeavor,
Let the great meaning enoble it ever,
Droop not o'er efforts expended in vain,
Work, as believing that labor is gain."

—*Queen Isabel, etc., by S. M.*

THE sturdy recusant against Myrtlewood croquet continued to be Rachel Curtis, and yet it was not a testimony against the game so much as real want of time for it. She was always full of occupation, even while her active mind craved for more definite and extended labor; and when she came upon the field of strategy, it was always either with some business before her, or else so late that the champions were only assisting their several lags to bring the battle to an end.

If there had been a will, there would have been a way; but, as she said, she saw enough to perceive that proficiency could only be attained at the cost of much time and study, and she did not choose to be inferior and mediocre. Also, she found occupations open to her elsewhere that had long been closed or rendered unpleasant. Mr. Touchett had become wonderfully pacific and obliging of late; as if the lawn tactics absorbed his propensities for offence and defence, he really seemed obliged for one or two bits of parish work that she attended to; finding that between him and his staff of young ladies they were getting omitted. Somehow, too, an unaccountable blight was passing over the activity of those curatresses, as Rachel had been wont to call them; they were less frequently to be met with popping out of the schools and cottages, and Rachel, who knew all the real poor, though refusing the bonds of a district, was continually detecting omissions which she more often supplied than reported. There was even a smaller sprinkling at the weekly services, and the odd thing was that the curate never seemed to remark or be distressed by the change, or if any one spoke of the thin congregation, he would say, winter was the Avonmouth season, which was true enough, but the defaulters were mostly his own peculiar followers, the female youth of the professional and mercantile population.

Rachel did not trouble herself about the cause of all this; indeed, she was too much

occupied with the gradual gliding into somewhat of her original activity and importance in the field thus left open to her. None the less, however, did she feel the burden of life's problems; the intercourse she had enjoyed with Colonel Keith had excited her for a time, but in the reaction, the old feelings returned painfully that the times were out of joint; the heavens above became obscure and misty as before, the dark places of the earth looked darker than ever, and those who lived at ease seemed to be employed either in sport upon the outside of the dungeon where the captives groaned, or in obstructing the way of those who would fain have plunged in to the rescue.

Her new acquaintance, Mr. Mauleverer, was an example of such prevention, which weighed much on her mind. He had been perfectly unobtrusive, but Mrs. Curtis, meeting him on the second day of his sketching, had naturally looked at his drawing, and admired it so much that she brought her daughters to see it when in course of completion the next day. He had then asked whether there would be any objection to his making use of the sketches in the way of remunerative sale. Mrs. Curtis looked rather taken aback; it hardly agreed with her exclusive notions of privacy, and he at once apologized with such humility that she was touched, and felt herself doing him a wrong, whilst Rachel was angry at her scruple, yet uncomfortably thought of "that landscape painter;" then said in her decided way, " You did not mean to object, mother? "

" Oh, not for a moment; pray don't think of it! " returned Mr. Mauleverer, in haste. " I would not think of the intrusion. It is only that these poor trifles are steps to one of the few means by which I can still hope to do even a little for my fellow-creatures,—the greatest solace that remains to me."

" My mother did not mean to prevent anything," said Rachel, eagerly,—" least of all any means of doing good."

" Indeed, I cannot but be aware that Miss Curtis is the last individual who would do so, except, indeed, by the good works she herself absorbs."

" You are too good, sir," returned Mrs. Curtis; " I am sure I did not mean to object to anything for good. If it is for a charity, I am sure some of our friends would be very glad to take some sketches of our scenery; they

have been begging me this long time to have it photographed. I should like to have that drawing myself, it would please your aunt so much, my dear, if we sent it to her."

Mr. Mauleverer bowed, but Rachel was not sure whether he had not been insulted.

Next day he left at the door the drawing handsomely mounted, and looking so grand and meritorious that poor Mrs. Curtis became much troubled in mind whether its proper price might not be five or even ten guineas, instead of the one for which she had mentally bargained, or if this might not be the beginning of a series, "which would be quite another thing, you know, my dear."

Rachel offered to go and talk to the artist, who was sketching in full view from the windows, and find out what value he set upon it.

"Perhaps, but I don't know, my dear. Wont it be odd? Had you not better wait till Grace comes in, or till I can first come down with you?"

"No need at all, mother; I can do it much better alone, and at my age."

So Rachel took a parasol and stepped out, looked at the outline newly produced, thanked and praised the drawing that had been received, adding that her mother would be glad to know what price Mr. Mauleverer set upon it. She was met by a profession of ignorance of its value, and of readiness to be contented with whatever might be conferred upon his project: the one way in which he still hoped to be of service to his fellow-creatures, the one longing of his life.

"Ah!" said Rachel, greatly delighted with this congenial spirit, and, as usual, preferring the affirmative to the interrogative. "I heard you had been interesting yourself about Mrs. Kelland's lace-school. What a miserable system it is!"

"My inquiries have betrayed me then? It is indeed a trying spectacle."

"And to be helpless to alleviate it," continued Rachel. "Over-work, low prices, and middle men perfectly batten on the lives of our poor girls here. I have thought it over again and again, and it is a constant burden on my mind."

"Yes, indeed. The effects of modern civilization are a constant burden on the compassion of every highly-constituted nature."

"The only means that seems to me likely to mitigate the evil," continued Rachel, charmed

at having the most patient listener who had ever fallen to her lot, "would be to commence an establishment where some fresh trades might be taught, so as to lessen the glut of the market, and to remove the workers that are forced to undersell one another, and thus oblige the buyers to give a fairly remunerative price."

"Precisely my own views. To commence an establishment that would drain off the superfluous labor, and relieve the oppressed, raising the whole tone of female employment?"

"And this is the project you meant?"

"And in which, for the first time, I begin to hope for success, if it can only receive the patronage of some person of influence."

"Oh, anything I can do!" exclaimed Rachel, infinitely rejoiced. "It is the very thing I have been longing for for years. What, you would form a sort of industrial school, where the children could be taught some remunerative labor, and it might soon be almost self-supporting."

"Exactly; the first establishment is the difficulty, for which I have been endeavoring to put a few mites together."

"Every one would subscribe for such a purpose!" exclaimed Rachel.

"You speak from your own generous nature, Miss Curtis; but the world would require patronesses to recommend."

"There could be no difficulty about that!" exclaimed Rachel; but at this moment she saw the Myrtlewood pony-carriage coming to the door, and remembering that she had undertaken to drive out Ermine Williams in it, she was obliged to break off the conversation, with an eager entreaty that Mr. Mauleverer would draw up an account of his plan, and bring it to her the next day, when she would give her opinion on it, and consider of the means.

"My dear," said her mother, on her return, "how long you have been; and what am I to give for the water-color?"

"Oh, I forgot all about the water-color; but never mind what we give, mamma, it is all to go to an asylum for educating poor girls, and giving them some resource beyond that weary lace-making,—the very thing I have always longed for. He is coming to settle it all with me to-morrow, and then we will arrange what to give."

"Indeed, my dear, I hope it will be some-

thing well managed. I think if it were not for those middle men, lace-making would not be so bad. But you must not keep poor Miss Williams waiting."

Ermine had never seen Rache! in such high spirits as when they set out through the network of lanes, describing her own exceeding delight in the door thus opening for the relief of the suffering over which she had long grieved, and launching out into the details of the future good that was to be achieved. At last Ermine asked what Rachel knew of the proposer.

"Captain Keith heard he was a distinguished professor and essayist."

"Then I wonder we have not heard his name," said Ermine. "It is a remarkable one; one might look in the 'Clergy List' at Villars's."

"Villars called him a clerical gentleman," mused Rachel.

"Then you would be sure to be able to find out something about him before committing yourself."

"I can see what he is," said Rachel,—"a very sensible accomplished man, and a great deal more,—not exactly a finished gentleman. But that is no objection to his doing a great work."

"Not at all," said Ermine, smiling; "but please forgive me. We have suffered so much from trusting too implicitly, that I never can think it safe to be satisfied without thorough knowledge of a person's antecedents."

"Of course," said Rachel, "I shall do nothing without inquiry. I will find out all about him; but I cannot see any opening for distrust. Schemes of charity are not compatible with self-seeking and dishonesty."

"But did I not hear something about opinions?"

"Oh, as to that, it was only Villars. Besides, you are a clergyman's daughter, and your views have a different coloring from mine. Modern research has introduced so many variations of thought that no good work would be done at all if we required of our fellow-laborers perfect similarity of speculative belief."

"Yet suppose he undertook to teach others?"

"The simple outlines of universal doctrine and morality which are required by poor children are not affected by the variations to

which investigation conducts minds of more scope."

"I am afraid such variations may often reach the foundation."

"Now, Miss Williams, I am sure you must often have heard it observed how, when it comes to real practical simple teaching of uninstructed people, villagers or maybe heathens, the details of party difference melt away, and people find themselves in accordance."

"True, but there I think party differences in the church, and even the variations between Christian sects are concerned, both being different ways of viewing the same truth. These may, like the knights in the old fable, find that both were right about the shield, both have the same foundation. But where the foundation is not the same, the results of the teaching will not agree."

"Every one agrees as to morality."

"Yes, but do all give a motive sufficient to enforce the self-denial that morality entails? Nay, do they show the way to the spiritual strength needful to the very power of being moral?"

"That is begging the question. The full argument is whether the full church, say Christian system, exactly as you, as we hold it, is needful to the perfection of moral observance. I don't say whether I assent, but the present question is whether the child's present belief and practice need be affected by its teacher's dogmatic or undogmatic system."

"The system for life is generally formed in childhood. Harvest depends on seed-time."

"And after all," added Rachel, "we have no notion whether this poor man be not precisely of your own opinions, and from their fruits I am sure you ought to claim them."

"Their blossoms if you please," laughed Ermine. "We have not seen their fruits yet."

"And I shall take care the fruits are not nipped with the blight of suspicion," said Rachel, good-humoredly.

However, after driving Ermine home, and seeing her lifted out and carried into the house by her sister, Rachel did send the carriage back by the groom and betake herself to Villars's shop, where she asked for a sight of the "Clergy List." The name of

Mauleverer caught her eye but only one instance of it appeared, and he was a cathedral canon, his presentation dated in 1832, the time at which, judging from appearances, the object of her search might have been born; besides, he rejoiced in the simple name of Thomas. But Rachel's search was brought to an abrupt conclusion by the issue of Mr. Mauleverer himself from the reading-room within the shop. He bowed and passed by; but Rachel for the life of her could not hinder a burning color from spreading to the very tips of her ears, so certain did she feel that she was insulting him by her researches, and that he perceived them. She felt absolutely ashamed to see him the next day, and even in her dreams was revolving speeches that might prove that, though cautious and clear-sighted, she was neither suspicious nor narrow-minded.

He came when some morning visitors were at the Homestead, prosy neighbors whose calls were always a penance to Rachel; and the butler, either from the manner of the inquiry or not regarding him as drawing-room company, put him into the dining-room and announced, "Mr. Mauleverer to see Miss Rachel." Up jumped Miss Rachel, with "You'll excuse me; it is on business," and went off highly satisfied that "the mother" was hindered by politeness from making any attempt at chaperonage, either personally or through Grace, so unnecessary at her age; for since Colonel Keith's departure, Rachel's age had begun to grow on her again. She held out her hand as if to atone for her search; but she found at once that it had been remarked.

"You were doing me the honor to look for my name in the 'Clergy List,' Miss Curtis," he said.

"Yes, one is apt,"—faltered Rachel, decidedly out of countenance.

"I quite appreciate the motive. It is exactly in accord with Miss Curtis's prudence and good sense. I should wish to be fully explicit before any arrangements are made. I am unhappily not in orders, Miss Curtis, I know your liberality will regard the cause with leniency."

"Indeed," said Rachel, sufficiently restored to recall one of her premeditated reassurances. "I can fully appreciate any reluctance to become stringently bound to dog-

matic enunciations, before the full powers of the intellect have examined into them."

"You have expressed it exactly, Miss Curtis. Without denying an iota of them, I may be allowed to regret that our formulares are too technical for a thoughtful mind in the present age."

"Many have found it so," returned Rachel, thoughtfully, "who only needed patience to permit their convictions to ripen. Then I understand you, it is a rejection on negative not positive grounds."

"Precisely; I do not murmur, but it has been the blight of my life."

"And yet," said Rachel, consolingly, "it may enable you to work with more freedom."

"Since you encourage me to believe so, Miss Curtis, I will hope it; but I have met with much suspicion."

"I can well believe it," said Rachel; "even some of the most superior persons refuse to lay their hands to any task unless they are certified of the religious opinions of their coadjutors, which seems to me like a mason's refusing to work at a wall with a man who liked Greek architecture when he preferred Gothic!"

If Rachel had been talking to Ermine, she might have been asked whether the dissimilarity might not be in the foundations, or in the tempering of the mortar; but Mr. Mauleverer only commended her liberal spirit, and she thought it high time to turn from this subject to the immediate one in hand. He had wished to discuss the plan with her, he said, before drawing it up, and in effect she had cogitated so much upon it that her ideas came forth with more than her usual fluency and sententiousness. The scheme was that an asylum should be opened under the superintendence of Mr. Mauleverer himself, in which young girls might be placed to learn handicrafts that might secure their livelihood, in especial, perhaps, wood engraving and printing. It might even be possible, in time, to render the whole self-supporting, suppose by the publication of a little illustrated periodical, the materials for which might be supplied by the talents of those interested in the institution.

If anything could add to Rachel's delight, it was this last proposition. In all truth and candor, the relief to the victims to lace-

making was her primary object, far before all besides, and the longing desire of her heart for years seemed about to be fulfilled; but a domestic magazine, an outlet to all the essays on Curatocult, or Helplessness, on Female Folly, and Female Rights, was a development of the plan beyond her wildest hopes! No dull editor to hamper, reject, or curtail! She should be as happy, and as well able to expand, as the invalid herself.

Mr. Mauleverer had brought a large packet of letters with him, in all manner of hands. There were some testimonials from a German university, and letters from German professors in a compromise between English and German hand, looking impossible to read, also the neat writing and thin wavy water-marked paper of American professors and philanthropists in high commendation of his ability and his scheme, and a few others that he said were of too private a nature to do more than show Miss Curtis in confidence, but on which she recognized some distinguished names of persons interested in social science. She would not wound his feelings by too close an inquiry, but she felt armed at all points against cavillers. Really, she began to think, it was a great pity Colonel Keith should cross her path again, she had so much on her hands that it would be a public misfortune if any one man's private domestic love should monopolize her; and yet, such was this foolish world, the Honorable Mrs. Colin Keith would be a more esteemed lady patroness than Miss Rachel Curtis, though the Curtises had been lords of the soil for many generations, and Colonel Keith was a mere soldier of fortune.

One disappointment Rachel had; namely, that Mr. Mauleverer announced that he was about to return to St. Norbert's, the very large and fashionable watering-place in the next indentation of the coast. He had duties there, he said, and he had only come to Avonmouth for a brief holiday,—a holiday that was to result in such happy effects. He lived in an exceedingly retired way, he said, being desirous of saving his small private means for his great object, and he gave Rachel his address at the chief print-seller's of the place, where his letters were left for him, while he made excursions from time to time to study the picturesque, and to give lectures on behalf of philanthropical subjects. He offered such a lecture at Avonmouth; but Mr. Touchett would not lend either school-

room, and space was nowhere else available. In the mean time a prospectus was drawn up, which Rachel undertook to get printed at Villars's, and to send about to all her friends, since a subscription in hand was the first desideratum.

Never since she had grown up to be a thinking woman had Rachel been so happy as with this outlet to her activity and powers of managing "the good time coming at last." Eagerly she claimed sympathy, names, and subscriptions. Her own immediate circle were always easily under her influence, and Lady Temple and Mrs. Curtis supplied the dignity of lady patronesses; Bessie Keith was immensely diverted at the development of "that landscape painter," and took every opportunity of impressing on Rachel that all was the result of her summons to the rescue. Ermine wished Rachel had found out who was the bishop's chaplain who rejected him, but allowed that it would have been an awkward question to ask, and also she wondered if he were a university man; but Mr. Touchett had been at a Hall, and never knew anybody, besides being so convinced that Mr. Mauleverer was a pestiferous heretic that no one, except Lady Temple, could have obtained a patient answer from him on that head,—and here with her he went the length of a regret that she had given the sanction of her name to an undertaking by a person of whose history and principles nothing satisfactory was known. "Oh!" said Fanny, with her sweet look of asking pardon, "I am so sorry you think so; Rachel wished it so much, and it seems such a nice thing for the poor children."

"Indeed," said Mr. Touchett, well-nigh disarmed by the look, "I am quite sensible of the kindness of all you do; I only ventured to wish there had been a little more delay, that we were more certain about this person."

"When Colonel Keith comes back, he will find out all about him, I am sure," said Fanny, and Mr. Touchett, to whom seemed to have been transferred Rachel's dislike to the constant quoting of Colonel Keith, said no more.

The immediate neighborhood did not very readily respond to the appeal to it in behalf of the lace-makers. People who did not look into the circumstances of their neighbors thought lace furnished a good trade, and by

no means wished to enhance its price; people who did care for the poor had charities of their own, nor was Rachel Curtis popular enough to obtain support for her own sake; a few five pound notes and a scanty supply of guineas and half-guineas from people who were ready at any cost to buy off her vehement eyes and voice was all she could obtain, and with a subscription of twenty pounds each from her mother, Lady Temple, and Grace, and all that she could scrape together of her own, hardly seemed sufficient to meet the first expenses, and how would the future be provided for? She calculated how much she could spare out of her yearly income, and actually, to the great horror of her mother and the coachman, sold her horse.

Bessie Keith was the purchaser. It was an expense that she could quite afford, for she and her brother had been left very well off by their father,—a prudent man, who, having been a widower during his Indian service, had been able to live inexpensively, besides having had a large amount of prize money. She had always had her own horse at Littleworthy, and now when Rachel was one day lamenting to her the difficulty of raising money for the Industrial Asylum, and declaring that she would part with her horse if she were sure of its falling into good hands, Bessie volunteered to buy it, it was exactly what would suit her, and she should delight in it as a reminder of dear Avonmouth. It was a pang; Rachel loved the pretty spirited creature, and thought of her rides with the colonel; but how weigh the pleasure of riding against the welfare of one of those hard-worked, half-stifled little girls, and besides, it might be best to have done with Colonel Keith now, that her mission had come to find her. So the coachman set a purposely unreasonable value upon poor Meg, and Rachel reduced the sum to what had been given for it three years before; but Bessie begged her brother to look at the animal and give his opinion.

"Is that what you are after?" he exclaimed.

"Indeed, Alick, I thought it was the greatest kindness I could do her; she is so very eager about this plan, and so anxious to find poor Meg a good home."

"Purely to oblige her?"

"Of course, Alick, it was much more con-

venient to her than if she had had to send about to horse-dealers or to advertise. I doubt if she could have done it at all; and it is for her asylum, you know."

"Then give the coachman's sixty guineas at once."

"Ah, Alick, that's your infatuation!" and she put on a droll gesture of pity. "But excuse me, where would be the fine edge of delicacy in giving a manifestly fancy price? Come and look at her."

"I never meddle with horse-dealing."

"Stuff, as if you weren't the best-mounted man in the regiment. I shall send a note to Captain Sykes if you wont; he knows how to drive a bargain."

"And give a fancy price the other way. Well, Bessie, on one condition I'll go, and that is, that Meg goes to Bishopsworthy the day she is yours. I wont have her eating Lady Temple's corn, and giving her servants trouble."

"As if I should think of such a thing!"

Captain Keith's estimate of the value of the steed precisely agreed with Rachel's demand of the original price. Bessie laughed, and said there was collusion.

"Now seriously, Alick, do you think her worth so much? Isn't it a pity, when you know what a humbug poor Rachel is going to give it to?" and she looked half comical, half saucy.

"If she were going to throw it into the sea, I don't see what difference that would make."

"Ah! you are far too much interested. Nothing belonging to *her* can bear a vulgar price."

"Nothing belonging to me is to gain profit by her self-denial," said Alick, gravely. "You cannot do less than give her what she gave for it, if you enter on the transaction at all."

"You mean that it would look shabby. You see we womankind never quite know the code of the world on such matters," she said, candidly.

"There is something that makes codes unnecessary, Bessie," he said.

"Ah! I can make allowances. It is a cruel stroke. I don't wonder you can't bear to see any one else on her palfrey; above all, as a sacrifice to the landscape painter."

"Then spare my feelings, and send the

mare to Bishopsworthy," said Alick, as usual too careless of the imputation to take the trouble to rebut it or to be disconcerted.

Bessie was much tickled at his acceptance, and laughed heartily.

"To be sure," she said, "it is past concealment now. You must have been very far gone indeed to have been taken in to suppose me to be making capital of her 'charitable purposes.'"

"Your acting is too like life," he said, not yet induced to laugh, and she rattled on with her droll, sham, sentimental air, "Is it the long words, Alick, or is it 'the great eyes, my dear ;' or is it—oh, yes, I know what is the great attraction—that the Homestead doesn't possess a single spot where one could play at croquet!"

"Quite irresistible!" replied Alick, and Bessie retreated from the colloquy still not laughing at but with him ; that is, if the odd, quaint, inward mirth which only visibly lengthened his sleepy eyes could be called a laugh.

Next time Captain Keith rode to Avonmouth he met the riding party on the road. Bessie upon Rachel's mare ; and it appeared that Lady Temple had considered it so dreadful that Meg should not share her hospitality, that it had been quite impossible to send her away. "So, Alick, your feelings must endure the dreadful spectacle."

Meanwhile, Rachel was hard at work with the subscribers to the "Christian Knowledge Society." Beginning with the A's, and working down a page a day, she sent every member a statement of the wrongs of the lace-makers, and the plans of the industrial establishment, at a vast expense of stamps ; but then, as she calculated, one pound thus gained paid for two hundred and forty fruitless letters.

"And pray," said Alick, who had ridden on to call at the Homestead, "how do you reconcile yourself to the temptation to the postmen?"

"They don't see what my letters are about?"

"They must be dull postmen if they don't remark on the shower of envelopes that pass through their hands—ominous money-letters, all with the same address, and no detection remember. You don't know who will answer and who will not."

"I never thought of that," said Rachel ;

"but risks must be run when any great purpose is in hand."

"The corruption of one postman *versus* the rescue of—how many children make a postman?" asked Captain Keith, with his grave, considering look.

"The postman would be corrupt already," said Grace, as Rachel thought the last speech too mocking to be worthy of reply, and went on picking up her letters.

"There is another objection," added Captain Keith, as he watched her busy fingers. "Have you considered how you are frightening people out of the society? It is enough to make one only subscribe as Michael Misserly or as Simon Skinflint, or something equally uninventing to applications."

"I shall ask you to subscribe by both names!" said Rachel, readily. "How much for Simon Skinflint?"

"Ten pounds. Stop—when Mr. Mauleverer gives him a reference."

"That's ungenerous. Will Michael Misserly make up for it?"

"Yes, when the first year's accounts have been audited."

"Ah! those who have no faith to make a venture can never effect any good."

"You evidently build on a great amount of faith from the public. How do you induce them to believe? do you write in your own name?"

"No, it makes mamma unhappy. I was going to put R. C.; but Grace said people would think it meant Roman Catholic. Your sister thought I had better put the initials of Female Union for Lace-makers' Employment."

"You don't mean that Bessie persuaded you to put that?" exclaimed Alick Keith, more nearly starting up than Rachel had ever seen him.

"Yes. There is no objection; is there?"

"Oh, Rachel, Rachel, how could we have helped thinking of it?" cried Grace, nearly in a state of suffocation.

Rachel held up her printed appeal, where subscriptions were invited to the address of F. U. L. E., the Homestead, Avonmouth.

"Miss Curtis, though you are not Scottish, you ought to be well read in Walter Scott."

"I have thought it waste of time to read incorrect pictures of pseudo-chivalry since I have been grown up," said Rachel. "But that has nothing to do with it."

"Ah, Rachel, if we had been more up in our Scotch, we should have known what F. U. L. E. spells," sighed Grace.

A light broke in upon Rachel. "I am sure Bessie never could have recollect ed it!" was her first exclamation. "But there," she continued, too earnest to see or stumble at straws, "never mind. It cannot be helped, and I dare say not one person in ten will be struck by it."

"Stay," said Grace, "let it be English-woman's Employment. See, I can very easily alter the L into an E."

Rachel would hardly have consented, but was forced to yield to her mother's entreaties. However, the diligent transformation of L's did not last long; for three days after a parcel was left at the Homestead containing five thousand printed copies of the appeal, with the E rightly inserted. Bessie laughed, and did not disavow the half reluctant thanks for this compensation for her inadvertence or mischief, whichever it might be, laughing the more at Rachel's somewhat ungrateful confession that she had rather the cost had gone into a subscription for the F. U. E. E. As Bessie said to herself, it was much better and more agreeable for all parties that it should so stand, and she would consider herself in debt to Alick for the amount. Indeed, she fully expected him to send her in the bill, but in the mean time not one word was uttered between the brother and sister on the subject. They understood one another too well to spend useless words.

Contrary to most expectation, there was result enough from Rachel's solicitations to serve as justification for the outlay in stamps. The very number of such missives that fly about the world proves that there must be a great amount of uninquiring benevolence to render the speculation anything but desperate, and Rachel met with very tolerable success. Mr. Mauleverer called about once a week to report progress on his side, and, in his character of treasurer, to take charge of the sums that began to accumulate. But Rachel had heard so much on all sides of the need of caution in dealing with one so entirely a stranger, that she resolved that no one should blame her for imprudence, and therefore retained in her own name, in the Avonchester Bank, all the sums that she received. Mr. Mauleverer declared himself quite contented with this arrangement,

and eagerly anticipated the apologies that Rachel was ashamed even to make to him.

Enough was collected to justify a beginning on a small scale. A house was to be taken where Mr. Mauleverer and a matron would receive the first pupils, teach them wood-engraving, and prepare the earlier numbers of the magazine. When a little more progress had been made, the purchase of a printing-press might be afforded, and it might be struck off by the girls themselves, but in the mean time they must be dependent on the regular printer. On this account, Mr. Mauleverer thought it best to open the establishment, not at Avonmouth, but at St. Norbert's, where he had acquaintance that would facilitate the undertaking.

Rachel was much disappointed. To be in and out constantly, daily teaching and watching the girls, and encouraging them by learning the employment herself, had been an essential portion of her vision. She had even in one of her most generous moods proposed to share the delight with the Williamses, and asked Ermine if she would not, if all things suited, become the resident matron. However, Mr. Mauleverer said that there was an individual of humbler rank, the widow of a National School master so anxious to devote herself to the work that he had promised she should share it whenever he was in a condition to set the asylum on foot; and he assured Rachel that she would find this person perfectly amenable to all her views, and ready to work under her. He brought letters in high praise of the late schoolmaster, and recommendations of his widow from the clergyman of the parish where they had lived; and place and name being both in the "Clergy List," even Ermine and Alison began to feel ashamed of their incredulity, whilst as to Grace, she had surrendered herself completely to the eager delight of finding a happy home for the little children in whom she was interested. Grace might laugh a little at Rachel, but in the main her trust in her sister's superiority always led her judgment, and in the absence of Colonel Keith, Fanny was equally willing to let Rachel think for her when her own children were not concerned.

Rachel did not give up her hopes of fixing the asylum near her till after a considerable effort to get a house for it at Avonmouth; but this was far from easy. The Curtises' un-

willingness to part with land for building purposes enhanced the price of houses, and in autumn and winter the place was at its fullest, so that she could not even rent a house but at a ruinous price. It would be the best way to build on Homestead land; but this would be impracticable until spring, even if means were forthcoming, as Rachel resolved they should be, and in the mean time she was obliged to acquiesce in Mr. Mauleverer's assurance that a small house in an overbuilt portion of St. Norbert's would be more eligible than one in some inland parish. Anything was better than delay. Mr. Mauleverer was to superintend from his lodgings.

Rachel went with Grace and her mother to St. Norbert's and inspected the house, an ordinary cheap one, built to supply lodgings for the more economical class o' visitors. It was not altogether what Rachel wished, but must serve till she could build, and perhaps it would be best to form her experience before her plans. Mr. Mauleverer's own lodgings were near at hand, and he could inspect progress. The furniture was determined upon,—neat little iron beds for the dormitories, and all that could serve for comfort and even pleasure; for both Mr. Mauleverer and Rachel were strong against making the place bare and workhouse-like, insulting poverty and dulling the spirit.

Grace suggested communication with the clergyman of the parish; but the north hill turned out not to belong to St. Norbert's proper, being a part of a great moorland parish, whose focus was twelve miles off. A district was in course of formation, and a church was to be built; but in the mean time the new houses were practically almost pastorless, and the children and their matron must take their chance on the free seats of one of the churches of St. Norbert's. The staff of clergy there were so busy that no one liked to add extra parochial work to their necessary duties, and there was not sufficient acquaintance with them to judge how they would view Mr. Mauleverer's peculiarities. Clerical interference was just what Rachel said she did not want; it was an escape that she did not call it meddling.

One bit of patronage at least she could exercise; a married pair of former Homestead servants had set up a fuel store at St. Norbert's, receiving coal from the ships, and retailing it. They were to supply the F. U. E.

E. with wood, coal, and potatoes; and this was a great ingredient in Mrs. Curtis's toleration. The mother liked anything that brought custom to Rossiter and Susan.

The establishment was at present to consist of three children; the funds were not sufficient for more. One was the child of the matron, and the other two were Lovedy Kelland and the daughter of a widow in ill-health, whose family were looking very lean and ill-cared for. Mrs. Kelland was very unwilling to give Lovedy up; she had always looked to receiving the apprentice fee from the Burnaby bargain for her as soon as the child should be fourteen, and she had a strong prejudice against any possible disturbance to the lace trade; but winter would soon come, and her sale was uncertain; her best profit so dependent on Homestead agency that it was impolitic to offend Miss Curtis; and, moreover, Lovedy was so excited by the idea of learning to make pictures to books that she forgot all the lace dexterity she had ever learned, and spoiled more than she made, so that Mrs. Kelland was almost reduced to accept the kind proposal that Lovedy should be Lady Temple's nominee, and be maintained by her at the F. U. E. at seven shillings a week.

Fanny, however, asked the clergyman's consent first, telling him, with her sweet, earnest smile, how sorry she was for the little girl, and showing him the high testimonials to Mrs. Rawlings. He owned that they were all that could be wished, and even said at her request that he would talk to Mr. Mauleverer. What the talk amounted to they never knew; but when Fanny said "she hoped he had found nothing unsatisfactory, the poor man must be so glad to be of use;" Mr. Touchett replied with, "Indeed, it is an unfortunate situation:" and his opposition might thenceforth be considered as suspended.

"Of course," quoth Bessie, "we know by what witchery!" But Alison Williams, her listener, turned on her such great eyes of wilful want of comprehension that she held her peace.

Rachel and Grace united in sending Mary Morris, the other child; they really could do nothing more, so heavily had their means been drawn upon for the first expenses; but Rachel trusted to do more for the future, and resolved that her dress should henceforth cost no more than Alison Williams's; indeed,

she went through a series of assertions by way of examining Alison on the expenses of her wardrobe.

The house was taken from Michaelmas, and a few days after the two little victims, as Bessie laughingly called them, were taken over to St. Norbert's in the Homestead carriage, Lady Temple chaperoning the three young ladies to see the inauguration, and the height of Rachel's glory.

They were received by Mr. Mauleverer at the door, and slightly in the rear saw the matron, Mrs. Rawlings, a handsome pale woman, younger than they expected, but whose weeds made Fanny warm to her directly; but she was shy and retiring, and could not be drawn into conversation; and her little Alice was only three years old, much younger than Rachel had expected as a pupil, but a very pretty creature with great black eyes.

Tea and cake were provided by way of an inaugurating feast, and the three little girls sat up in an atmosphere of good cheer, strongly suggestive of school feasts, and were left in the midst, with many promises of being good, a matter that Lovedy seemed to think would be very easy in this happy place, with no lace to make.

Mrs. Rawlings, whose husband had been a trained schoolmaster, was to take the children to church, and attend to their religious instruction; indeed, Mr. Mauleverer was most anxious on this head, and as Rachel already knew the scruples that withheld him from ordination were only upon the absolute binding himself to positive belief in minor technical points, that would never come in the way of young children.

Altogether, the neat freshness of the room, the urbanity of Mr. Mauleverer, the shy grace of the matron, all left a most pleasant impression. Rachel was full of delight and triumph, and Grace and Fanny quite enthusiastic, the latter even to the being sure that the colonel would be delighted; for the colonel was already beginning to dawn on the horizon, and not alone. He had written, in

the name of his brother, to secure a cottage of gentility of about the same calibre as Myrtlewood, newly completed by a speculator on one of the few bits of ground available for building purposes. A name was yet wanting to it; but the day after the negotiation was concluded, the landlord paid the delicate compliment to his first tenant by painting "Gowanbrae" upon the gate-posts in letters of green. "Go and bray," read Bessie Keith, as she passed by; "for the sake of the chief of my name, I hope that it is not an omen of his occupations here."

The two elder boys were with her; and while Francis, slowly apprehending her meaning in part, began to bristle up with the assurance that "Colonel Keith never brayed in his life," Conrade caught the point with dangerous relish, and dwelt with colonial disrespect, that alarmed his mother, on the opinion expressed by some unguarded person, in his hearing, that Lord Keith was little better than an old donkey. "He is worse than Aunt Rachel," said Conrade, meditatively, "now she has saved Don, and keeps away from the croquet."

Meanwhile, Rachel studied her own feelings. A few weeks ago her heart would have leaped at the announcement; but now her mission had found her out, and she did not want to be drawn aside from it. Colonel Keith might have many perfections; but alike as Scotsman, soldier, and High Churchman, he was likely to be critical of the head of the F. U. E. E., and matters had gone too far now for her to afford to doubt, or to receive a doubting master. Moreover, it would be despicable to be diverted from a great purpose by a courtship like any ordinary woman; nor must marriage settlements come to interfere with her building and endowment of the asylum, and ultimate devotion of her property thereunto. No, she would school herself into a system of quiet discouragement, and reserve herself and her means as the nucleus of the great future establishment for maintaining female rights of labor.

WET AND DRY.—On one occasion, when coming to church, Dr. Macknight, who was a better commentator than preacher, having been caught in a shower of rain, entered the vestry soaked with wet. Every means were used to relieve him from his discomfort; but as the time drew on for divine service he became much distressed, and

ejaculated over and over, "Oh, I wish that I was dry! Do you think I'm dry? do you think I'm dry eneuch noo?" To this his jocose colleague, Dr. Henry, the historian, returned, "Bide a wee, doctor, and ye'se be dry eneuch when ye get into the pu'pit."

From The Saturday Review.

**MEMOIRS, MISCELLANIES, AND LETTERS
OF THE LATE LUCY AIKIN.***

To some of our readers Lucy Aikin will very possibly be a new name; to others, one so old that the wonder will be how it comes to be revived now; while the better-informed will have been prepared for the indispensable Memoir and Remains which in these days are as necessary a testimony to a departed literary celebrity as an entry in the newspaper obituary. The present volume tells us as little as memoir can of the life of its subject. It does little, indeed, beyond informing us that she was born in 1781, and died in 1864,—giving some account of her parentage, with a record of removals from “the blue bed to the brown,” from Stoke Newington to Hampstead, and from Wimbledon to Hampstead back again,—inserting a few pages of infantine autobiography, and naming the friends with whom she associated. But from these meagre facts, helped out by her letters and some experiments in essay writing, we derive a sufficiently definite idea of a literary woman of a type quite distinct from any to be met with now, and yet clearly the precursor of a prominent school of female writers among ourselves. Lucy Aikin, niece of Mrs. Barbauld, was one of a remarkable family to whom “talent was an inheritance.” Her father, Dr. Aikin (editor of the *Athenaeum*), and her two brothers were all distinguished both in literature and science. She came into the world with a name, and a circle of admirers ready to gather round her. An Aikin, as such, was expected, in a particular set, to be remarkable in some department, and she did not disappoint expectation. Some persons rebel against a part thus laid out for them, but Miss Aikin accepted it at once. All her life she felt herself to be a marked member of a distinguished circle, and the impression imparted weight and dignity to her character. She was one of the many people who owe much to their deficiencies. Sense was her forte, and she was more conspicuously sensible, both in her own and others' eyes, from not possessing a touch of genius. Cultivating her powers to the utmost, and of a temper to see things at their brightest, she was too merely sensible to know how far she

came short when she had done her best, and therefore she escaped discouragement. She took all the praise she got simply, and without misgiving, and was modestly thankful to have her due. Thus sustained, she succeeded in working out her ideal life. We find no sentimental complaints of the world's hollowness; her family, her friends, her society, her pursuits, her success, all satisfied her. It is remarkable how much a theory of life can do for minds of a certain strength and docility combined,—minds that are able at once to adopt the opinions of a school without doubt or question, and to make the best of them. Miss Aikin worked out the Unitarian social theory, was one of its model women, and so far personified that theory that we regret that no portrait or description of her face and person enables us to picture her to ourselves in this aspect.

People who are conscious of always doing their utmost, and always attaining their ends, can scarcely avoid a certain smugness of tone when self is the subject. We do not say that Miss Aikin talks too much about herself; yet, whenever self is touched on, we are struck with a serenity and complacency which are unusual in the treatment of such a theme. It is said of one of the West India islands, that all the little boys there are very good, and all know it. This strikes us as Miss Aikin's case. She tells us, for instance, that at three years old she escaped two dangers. Her grandmother once called her dunce, which might have had the effect of discouraging her if repeated, but happily it never was repeated; and, on the other hand, the world flattered the “rosy child of three” till she might have been totally spoiled, if her mother had not taught her what flattery was, and warned her not to be led away by it. Again, a year or two later, she remembered expressing herself with such warmth and spirit in an appeal to the parental authority against her brother, on the occasion of his eating more than his share of tart, that her father exclaimed,—

“ ‘ Why, Lucy, you are quite eloquent! ’ Oh, never-to-be-forgotten praise! Had I been a boy, it might have made me an orator; as it was, it excited me to exert to the utmost, by tongue and pen, all the power of words I possessed, or could ever acquire. I had learned where my strength lay.”

Later on in life, when she was beginning to

* *Memoirs, Miscellanies, and Letters of the late Lucy Aikin.* Edited by Philip Hemery Le Breton. London: Longman & Co. 1864.

be a lion on her own account, she writes from Edinburgh to her father, after having surprised the literary ladies there by some culinary accomplishment:—

"I never feel the value of the knowledge that you and my dear mother have been at such pains to instil into me so much as when I am among strangers, and find myself capable of improving them in something useful or ornamental. Then, when I meet with any commendations, and people say, 'How did you learn it?' what a proud delight have I in answering, My father taught me this, my mother that; one of my brothers informed me of such a thing; in short, not only the foundation stone, but every other in the fabric of my mind and manners, was laid by an honored and a loving hand; no mercenary touched it."

In something of the same strain is her testimony to her Aunt Barbauld's hymns in prose,—compositions inconceivably vapid to some tastes. "They taught me piety."

We cannot, however, doubt that all the pains lavished by herself and others on her training were well bestowed. At a time when conversation and social intercourse were still arts, she could play her part with distinguished credit. We see that eminent men sought her society, and talked their best before her, while she was the acknowledged equal of the more conspicuous lights of her own sex. After an experience of fifty years, she exclaims with rapture to Dr. Channing, "Oh, the noble, the glorious, beings whom it has been my privilege to see and know! What would life be without the commerce of superior minds, what earth without the salt of the earth?" And the catalogue of her friends really excuses the tone of exultation. We have Joanna Baillie, Mrs. Somerville, Priestley, Professor Smyth, Roscoe, Hallam, Rogers, Wishaw, William Taylor, Sir H. Holland, Denman, Brougham, Malthus, Harriet Martineau, with occasional glimpses of Scott, Wordsworth, Jeffrey, and a host of others. Her privileges in the way of good talk were really remarkable, and no one values this like a clever woman, or perhaps is a better judge of it. Thus, in 1827, she goes to Cambridge with some friends, and writes,—

"The Professor [Smyth] gave us two grand dinners, and assembled several of the brightest stars of the university to meet us. . . . We had also Sedgwick, Woodwardian Professor, and the great mathematician, Whewell. These are two intimate friends, and a good

deal alike in their cast of mind and manners. That is to say, they are very clever and able men of that kind of which Mr. Brougham is the great exemplar,—men of wonderful energy and activity of mind, profound in one or two branches of knowledge, and ignorant of none, whose conversation teems with allusions drawn from the most various and distant sources, illustrating bright and original ideas of their own; men to whom it is a delight, but not a relaxation, to listen,—whose thoughts flow almost too rapidly for language to overtake them, whose ideas come crowding and jostling like a crowd in a narrow gate. For Mr. Brougham, the experience of the world, and the habit of applying his eloquence to practical points of law and politics, on which it is his business to talk down to very ordinary capacities, has moderated the exuberance which reigns unchecked in these academies; but if any form of circumstances could have tied him down to a college life, he would have been such as one of these."

Nor does her appreciation of her own clever set blind her to its arrogance. Dr. Channing has made some inquiries, to which she replies (1830):—

"I have heard the two works you mention spoken of with high praise by a few good judges; but I have not yet seen them. The author, I am told, is a Mr. Bailey, of Sheffield, but this is all I can learn. You cannot conceive how much the lettered aristocracy of London society disdains to know anything of provincial genius or merit, at least in any but the most popular branches of literature. Montgomery, a Sheffield poet, being also an Evangelical, is tolerably well known in London, and may in some companies be slightly mentioned without committing the speaker. But a Sheffield metaphysician!—bold were the London dinner-out who would dare not to be ignorant of him. You once observed to me that everywhere the *sovereign* is worshipped; with us that sovereign is an idol called Gentility, and costly are the offerings laid upon the altar. Dare to make conversation in the most accomplished society something of an exercise of the mind, and not a mere dissipation, and you constantly become that thing of horror,—*a bore*."

Perhaps the London dinner-table was jealous of the greatest lions of all out of its own set. Miss Aikin meets (1815) Walter Scott and his daughter (afterwards Mrs. Lockhart), and is not as enthusiastic in her tone as we might have expected. She thinks the lion of the day did not utter such roarings as her next neighbor, Mr. Sotheby, and she talks of Scott with a little air of patronage:—

"He (Scott) was delighted to see my aunt, and paid her great attention, which I was very glad of. He told her that 'Tramp, tramp,' 'Splash, splash,' Taylor's 'Lenora,' which she had carried into Scotland to Dugald Stuart many years ago, was what made him a poet. I heard him tell a story or two with a dry kind of humor for which he is distinguished; and though he speaks very broad Scotch, is a heavy-looking man, and has little the air of a gentleman, I was much pleased with him; he is lively, spirited, and quite above all affectation. . . . A lady next Sotheby asked him if he did not think we could see by Mr. Scott's countenance, if 'Waverley' were mentioned, whether he was the author? 'I don't know,' said Mr. S.; 'we will try.' So he called out from the bottom of the table to the top, 'Mr. Scott, I have heard there is a new novel coming out by the author of "Waverley";' have you heard of it?' 'I have,' said the minstrel, 'and I believe it.' He answered very steadily, and everybody cried out directly, 'Oh, I am glad of it!' 'Yes,' said Mr. Wishaw, 'I am a great admirer of those novels;' and we began to discuss which was the best of the two. But Scott kept out of this debate, and had not the assurance to say any handsome things of the works, though *he* is not the author,—oh, no! for he denies them."

In religion, politics, and liberal views generally, Miss Aikin was throughout her long life faithful to the teaching of her youth; no rebellious or perverse originality struck out new theories, or inspired mistrust of the old ones. Any one who has glanced through her "Charles I." will have been impressed with her implicit one-sidedness, her democratic suspicion of kingcraft, her abhorrence of establishments, clergy, and bishops. But she was also candid; in a sense, she thought for herself, and learned much from experience. All this, of course, shows itself more in private correspondence than when she feels herself the responsible mouth-piece of a party. In her letters we mark not a few changes. She begins life a stancher republican than she ends it. It is hard to think much of manner, and to remain at heart an enemy of the aristocracy. It is hard to receive civilities from fine people and not be won over. In one of her didactic essays, it is true, she fights against the inevitable consequences of differences of rank, and reprobates a young lady for expecting her dressmaker to receive her orders standing: but she privately tells Dr. Channing,—

" You cannot, without seeing it, imagine the charm which waits upon a patroness of Almack's. Perfect good breeding is a beautiful thing to behold, and no *fine art* deserves to be more studied."

Very plainly telling him, on his claiming superior refinement for his countrywomen, that he had seen none of our ladies of rank. Her correspondence of sixteen years with Dr. Channing, in itself a testimony to remarkable qualities, was instrumental to a growing moderation of views and tone of thought, fostering her patriotism at some sacrifice of party spirit. The letters are compositions, as they ought to be. A woman aiming to keep a distinguished man, many thousand miles distant, *au courant* of all that was passing in England, was bound to take pains and do her best. The correspondence, indeed, was semi-official, for the Duke of Sussex, wishing to convey a message of civility to Channing, sends it through Miss Aikin, who is naturally pleased to convey to her friend this testimony to his appreciation in England,—as pleased to send as, we have little doubt, the distinguished democrat was to receive it. One effect of this intercourse was a softer tone. After all, to hate bishops and to denounce priestcraft is not to destroy the womanly nature. The moment Miss Aikin came under interesting clerical influence, she felt its power. A good woman is never quite happy without her favorite minister; and Dr. Channing professed a spirituality in religion which was new to her, who, till she became acquainted with him, had aimed at the old Roman virtue, had doubted whether prayer was not a weakness, and had roundly expressed her contempt for Bonaparte, in 1814, for allowing himself to be taken alive,—for "not extorting from us one phrase of admiration by a death generously voluntary, like that of Otho." Her letters are decidedly colored by the consciousness that she is addressing a pastor. Little confessions and regrets slip from her which she would have felt to be wholly out of place in addressing a lay friend; and in reporting to him a little bevy of strong-minded feminine admirers, ready in many points to take their cue from him, the fervor of her tone shows the subtle influence at work. "How," she asks,—

" can you for a moment doubt the great, the

inestimable, good you are working on many minds, in many lands? I must write to you a little more on this subject, and tell you what I think your greatest triumph, or at least that which most interests me, and it will lead me to a great topic hitherto untouched between us. The impression you have produced on the minds of *women* is one for which I bless God from the bottom of my heart. I need not tell you how precious your teaching is in the eyes of Joanna Baillie, and I have long since, I think, told you that admirable Mrs. Somerville was your zealous disciple. I have now to mention that you have another in Mrs. Mareet."

We can only hope he was not insensible to so august a trio of disciples.

Miss Aikin was so far a new light as to be very zealous for the rights of women; and she expresses herself on this subject in a tone which connects her with the party who have lately made themselves so busy. She is supercilious on conjugal obedience, laments over the merely domestic interests of her countrywomen, complains of their invincible prejudices, their frivolous and grovelling sentiments, and wishes they were taught the Latin classics, which at least might inspire them with a little patriotism, without which they can never deserve the friendship, whatever they may obtain of the love, of nobleminded men. She objects, at one time, to women visiting the poor, lest they should become as blindly prejudiced as the objects of their charitable sympathies; and, in fact, when in this groove, she runs on like any strong-minded sister of either hemisphere. But this tone is more imbibed from others than really part of herself.

The book is full of curious little notices of how the literary world looked upon current events in the stirring years from 1830 to 1850. Miss Aikin especially reports the disgust of her set at the inroad of tract literature. She and Hallam, in 1832, croaked together over the hundreds of thousands of penny magazines and cyclopædias; and a year or two afterwards she still laments that literature is swamped between politics and theology. "You may inquire in vain for light reading." "We can scarcely find new works sufficient to keep our Book Society alive." I suppose people will be tired of twopenny tracts ere long, and then there will again be a demand for books. Her contempt for theology does not allow her to enter fur-

ther into the tracts which no doubt, of all others, were to her the greatest and most irritating portent,—the "Tracts for the Times." Altogether we can recommend this book to the reader as a pleasant contribution to the history of our own times. It is full of allusions to people and things of lasting interest, and is written with a clearness and correctness of style which we must be allowed to call unusual among female writers.

From The Press.

Home Thoughts and Home Scenes in Original Poems. By Jean Ingelow, Dora Greenwell, Mrs. Tom Taylor, the Hon. Mrs. Norton, Amelia B. Edwards, Jennett Humphreys, and the author of "John Halifax, Gentleman;" and pictures by A. B. Houghton, engraved by the Brothers Dalziel. London: Routledge & Co.

THIS handsome volume is one of those picture-books which in bright clothing come as the heralds of Christmas. Their spirit is sportive, their countenance smiling, and thus their mission is to diffuse joy and gladness into the life of a merry-making time. "Home Thoughts and Home Scenes" are busy with the play of childhood; the volume is, indeed, a child's book,—just such a book, in fact, as a mother may open to her boy sitting on her knee, the one reading snatches of the poetry, the other looking the while at the enticing illustrations. Woman is the natural instructress of childhood, and thus, to make the volume better suited to its end, man has been excluded from the literary portion of the work altogether; in other words, the poems, of which there are thirty-five in number, are exclusively the offspring of ladies. These poems thereby gain in unity what they may lose in variety and vigor.

The type to which poetesses conformed some years ago was that furnished by Mrs. Hemans, the Carlo Dolce of poets,—soft, gushing, and decorative. Since came the reign of Mrs. Barrett Browning, who stood at the opposite end of the poetic scale; her harmonies often ran into discords; her outlines were rugged; her compositions wanted symmetry. Between these two extremes there is free space for intellects and imaginations fond of excursive flights to wander and yet find room to spare. The seven poetesses, for example, who have here made their small excursions through air and earth, move in orbits distant

from the sphere of either of their great predecessors. To approach Mrs. Browning were indeed a feat as difficult as undesirable, and to adopt the style habitual to Mrs. Hemans would merely be to mistake the taste of the age. Of the poets now before us, Jean Ingelow is in flavor most luscious, in form most voluptuous, and in the music of metre most subtly melodious. Yet she, too, is wide enough away from the Hemans mode of treatment and diction, as the poem, fairy-like in its tripping fancy, entitled "The Music of Childhood," proves. Jean Ingelow is not always free from obscurity,—a fault which, as in Shelley, often arises from the loading on of decorative diction to the darkening of the original thought. The verses contributed by Mrs. Tom Taylor are written with a trenchant hand; each epithet comes with point, and every word adds character to the picture. Of her four poems in this series, there is most spirit and most motion of metre in the family sketch, colored with a mother's joy, entitled "The Baby Brigade." There used to be three schools of poetry,—the Byronic school, heroic and passionate; the Lake school, long identified with Coleridge's "Ode to an Ass;" and the Cockney school, artificial and far removed from nature. Each of these systems has had its day, and now leaves not, at all events, in the present volume, a wreck behind. The Hon. Mrs. Norton at one time used to be Byronic and passionate; but she has—at least, in the poem called "Crippled Jane"—become simply naturalistic if not actually prosaic. Of the remaining poems little need be said; they will be read but scarcely remembered; few of the thoughts will by their beauty or novelty take possession of the memory or lay hold of the tongue by any felicity of expression. Out of the many lines which we have scanned, the following stanzas by Miss Muloch strike us as possessing more than the common measure of that electric fire, or rather of the ethereal beauty, which used to be deemed the life of poetry:—

"A SICK CHILD.

- " How the trembling children gather round,
Startled out of sleep and scared and crying!
" Is our merry little sister dying?
Will they come and put her underground.
- " As they did poor baby that May day?
Or will shining angels stoop and take her
On their snow-white wings to heaven, and
make her
- Sit among the stars, as fair as they? "

From The Saturday Review.

LA FEMME DANS L'HUMANITE.*

A TREATISE on woman, with special reference to Mdlle. Ninon de l'Enclos and other ladies of historical frailty, it would occur, probably, to no one but a Frenchman to write. And no one but a very ingenious Frenchman would venture on such a paradox as to say that the celebrated courtesan in question improved the morals of her age. M. de Pompery is very susceptible to female attractions. He can condone anything in a pretty woman. Chivalry seems to have entered on a new phase in these latter days. The fair sinner can no longer reckon on finding a knight to break a lance in honor of her charms, but she is pretty sure, if sufficiently conspicuous, of some kindly biographer who will do her the more substantial service of whitewashing her memory. Upon M. de Pompery her moral delinquencies make no more impression than water upon a duck's back. Mary Stuart's insincerity, Madame de Longueville's gallantries, the ill-regulated passions of Mdlle. de l'Espinasse, are all matters of trivial, or at any rate secondary, import. They were beautiful women, and beauty, like charity, covers a multitude of sins. Nor is beauty regarded in these instances merely as an extenuating circumstance. In the view of M. de Pompery, it is an essential part of woman's nature. It is that which makes her what she is. "La beauté," he says, "est tellement la première raison d'être de la femme, que si la beauté lui fait défaut, ses qualités s'effacent, et que lorsqu'elle resplendit, ses imperfections disparaissent." This is very comfortable doctrine for the well-favored portion of the fair sex, but it is a little harsh towards those whose personal endowments are less remarkable. Madame de Staël, for instance, was not beautiful, yet one would hardly, on that account, blot out her name in the catalogue of womankind. M. de Pompery seems to have a lurking suspicion that the facts do not exactly square with his theory. When he comes to reduce his work into the form of a series of axioms, he materially enlarges that hard saying of his, that woman and beauty are convertible terms. Every woman, he says, either *believes herself*, is, or *ought to be* beautiful. This is a very elastic proposition, to which no one

* "La Femme dans l'Humanité. Par Edouard de Pompery. Paris : Hachette et Cie. 1864."

need take exception. It is virtually an admission of the existence of those diversities of female attractiveness which M. de Pompery seemed, in his impulsive gallantry at starting, to ignore. The plainest woman may labor under the delusion that she is beautiful, and if not, one may say without impiety that it would be more in accordance with the fitness of things if she were beautiful.

According to M. de Pompery, there are two sides of woman's character,—one the active or positive, the other the passive or negative. She both moulds, and is moulded by, society. Beauty is the instrument by which she makes her influence felt. *Comme beaute, elle fait l'homme.* The natural man admires force. He acquires this notion of himself. It is from woman that he derives his first idea of the beautiful. In his chapter on human beauty, M. de Pompery traces the origin and growth of the "culte du beau." The savage begins by an awkward attempt to beautify himself. He paints his face and tattoos his skin. The result is a horrible caricature of the beautiful. But, as he gains in enlightenment and civilization, he recognizes his mistake in seeking the adornment of his own person. It is the concern of woman to be beautiful, not his. She is charm, while he is force. From the moment that this grand discovery dawns upon him, a new life, as it were, takes possession of him. All his energies are henceforth directed into a new channel. A fresh impulse is given to his exertions. He has an immediate object for his labor and ingenuity,—to minister to the pleasure and beauty of the graceful being at his side. The mainspring of art and industry is female beauty. Artists, poets, artisans, all set to work to pay homage to beauty, to extend its sphere of action, and illuminate the world with that splendid manifestation of life, the beautiful in the human species. There is something rather whimsical in this attempt to enroll the ladies among the earliest apostles of the Manchester school of ideas. We have read of woman in the capacity of *teterrima causa*, but M. de Pompery evidently considers her a chief instrument in the ultimate pacification of the world. If this happy consummation should ever be attained, it will probably be by other influences than mere female beauty. Before attributing to the fair sex this grand regenerating power, we ought to know in

what beauty consists. If it be the one essential and universal attribute of woman, there ought to be some common standard whereby to judge of it. It is easy to define woman as beauty, but will M. de Pompery go on to specify what constitutes beauty in woman? Unless he does so, he is only defining an obscure term *per obscurius*. As a matter of fact and of history, there is no point about which so much difference of opinion exists. The many anomalies in the moral sense of mankind have been often pointed out by psychologists and philosophers. In the field of aesthetics there is even less unanimity. As regards female beauty, no two nations, no two generations of the same nation, think alike. Dutch beauty is one thing, and Italian another, and the English type differs from both. The difference between these is as nothing compared with the difference which exists between the European ideal and the Melanesian or Andamanese. The notion of the beautiful in woman entertained by our early Hanoverian monarchs was as radically opposed to that of the bulk of their subjects as their notion of the delectable in oysters. Beauty, or rather its embodiment in woman, is eminently an affair of fashion and circumstance; and as they change, it changes too. The type of beauty adopted by one generation becomes a puzzle and stumbling-block to the succeeding. How often it happens, when the portrait of some historical beauty has been disinterred, that the first sensation is one of wonder at the taste of her contemporaries. Different classes, again, of the same community have different standards of loveliness, and their different predilections. What is the perfection of refinement to one class becomes the perfection of insipidity to another. In short, female beauty is purely subjective. The association of certain outlines, or a certain expression, with the idea of the beautiful depends on the idiosyncrasy of the person who so associates them. Far be it from us to grudge the fair sex any of the pretty things which M. de Pompery says about them. But he would do well to confine himself to rhapsody. To represent mere physical beauty as the *raison d'être* of woman is as derogatory to her real dignity as it is unphilosophical.

But there is also a passive side to woman's character. If the charm of her presence and her instinctive desire to please are im-

portant agencies in the civilization of the human race, on the other hand her impressionability lays her, as it were, at the mercy of her immediate surroundings. For a being so constituted, says M. de Pompery, there is no good or evil, or false or true. All is relative to the circumstances in which she is placed, and they are continually altering. With as much variableness as a crowd or a child,—swayed, like them, by the impression of the moment,—she shatters the idol which she just now adored, and exalts what she had cast down. By virtue of this impressionability, she reflects much more closely than man the epoch in which she exists. Nor is it only that the present mirrors itself in her. She is not merely an echo of the times. The society in which her lot is cast sets its mark upon her, moulds her character, makes her what she is. There have been many believers in fatalism, but M. de Pompery is the first writer whom we remember to have limited the necessitarian theory to the fair sex. It does his gallantry great credit to have hit on so ingenious a way of relieving them from the odium of any little moral obliquities that might possibly be laid to their charge. The incessant action of society shapes woman after its own image. She cannot escape from influences that press from every side on her variable and plastic nature. As society is, so will woman be. This is either a truism, or a fallacy of the most dangerous kind. In the mouth of M. de Pompery, it must be regarded as the latter. His doctrine strikes at the root of individual responsibility, for it comes very much to this,—that woman has no free will of her own, or cannot exercise it against the overwhelming pressure of the social atmosphere which surrounds her. In referring, for instance, to Mary Stuart, M. de Pompery observes that one forgives her, not only on account of her beauty, but because all that was ignoble in her conduct belonged to the horrible age in which she lived. Her beauty was her own, her vices those of her century. It has been the fashion for the apologists of the unhappy queen to maintain her innocence of the murder of her husband. M. de Pompery assumes her guilt, but coolly attributes it to the state of contemporary society. We cannot guess at the results of his historical research, but we certainly never heard that it was a common occurrence for royal ladies in the sixteenth century to blow

up their husbands with gunpowder. One of the most curious passages in this work is the author's eloquent justification of a woman's lie. If she lies nowadays, he says, it is because all around her is one great lie, and she reflects her surroundings. She lies because she is still under the dominion of force, and she has nothing to oppose it but craft. She lies because she is compelled to lie, and because, by reason of her malleable nature, she has got accustomed to it, and regards falsehood in the same light as a crinoline. It never seems to occur to our author that in painting society in these dark colors he is, by implication, blackening the character of the sex of which he is so ardent an admirer. It is a common trick with French writers to personify society as a sort of ogre, especially in its attitude toward the weaker sex. Every reader of "Les Misérables" will remember how constantly M. Victor Hugo harps on this string. The fact is purposely kept out of sight, that society merely means the aggregate of individual men and women who compose it. As they are, so will it be. M. de Pompery draws an absurd distinction when he says that woman acts upon man, but man upon society. Each sex has its share in making society what it is. And if the function of woman is merely to simper and look pretty, as is set forth in this volume, it is no wonder that her influence has hitherto been so little felt, and that society remains in the unsatisfactory condition depicted by M. de Pompery.

Happily she has a very different mission, as his fair compatriots would be the first to admit. Nowhere, perhaps, has the principle that it is the duty and right of woman to employ her faculties for her own and the common good made more way than in France. The relations of wife and mother remain, of course, of paramount importance. Her first duty lies in the domestic sphere; but there are other spheres in which she is as free to employ her powers of mind and body as man is. M. de Pompery touches very slightly on the subject of woman's employment. He thinks that it is premature to moot it in the present wicked state of society, unaware, apparently, of the many hundreds and thousands of his countrywomen who are gaining their daily bread by the work of their hands and brains. His dream of fair women includes nothing so prosaic as a housemaid, or a seamstress, or a shopwoman, or a school-

mistress. Even with an "imperfect civilization" these are callings which are safely followed by women, and with great advantage to the public interests. With regard to the future of woman, M. de Pompery indulges in a great many glowing generalities; but we look in vain for a single practical suggestion in his pages. As the world grows purer and better, as knowledge advances, as the reign of force is gradually superseded by the reign of peaceful industry and art and science, woman will participate in the general improvement. But, so far as she is concerned, the progress of civilization will be signalized not so much by extended usefulness as by increased beauty. The author of this volume even anticipates a day when her personal attractions will be positively dangerous. "Il y aurait là de quoi trembler pour le sexe fort, qui ayant le sens du beau à un plus haut degré, sera plus accessible au rayonnement de la femme." There may be some among the fair sex whose vanity may be flattered by such a prospect, but it is hardly likely to commend itself to any thoughtful or sensible woman.

From The Saturday Review.
IMPATIENCE.

It is quite possible that patience in the more trying positions of life may be compatible with impatience of manner and of conduct in little matters where the higher powers of the soul are not called in. "A great patience" is a thing of effort and principle, not of temperament. Our present concern, however, is mainly with that impatience which shows itself in the mode of meeting the little rubs of daily life: or rather which makes things rubs and trials to some people, which with others pass unnoticed, or which ordinary self-control renders endurable. It is a quality which very often interferes with the ease and pleasure of our intercourse with bright, quick-witted persons, whose society would otherwise be an unqualified refreshment; for we are not many of us patient enough for *two*,—not patient enough to be perfectly serene and unruffled in the close neighborhood of perturbation and restlessness, whether of movement or of mind. Our sympathy turns against us. What does not

annoy us on our own account becomes a bugbear if it is the sort of thing to try our friend's patience. We are disturbed and ill at ease, we don't know why, even before his characteristic declares itself.

We are not at all sure that the humoring of this impatient temper does not quicken and keep in vigor certain forms of cleverness. At any rate, we find it where we see readiness of repartee, and what are called sallies of pleasantry. These volatile spirits find it very hard work to tolerate any state of affairs at all against the grain, and dulness especially is so opposed to their nature that exposure to it becomes a haunting fear, and restraint of any sort is unendurable. In the same way, they will not stand anything that grates upon taste, any exhibition of character uncongenial to their own temper; so that a hundred traits which are not without interest to minds possessing patience to enter into them are to them simply irritating, if they run counter to their own humor. This sort of interest, and the habits induced by it, impatient people are strangers to. Such things as can be taken in at a glance they often see with exceptional penetration, with the rapidity of intuition; but a man's whole nature is not to be apprehended by this quick method, and therefore no impatient person has any real knowledge of character. It is impossible that he should; for this knowledge comes with study, in the same way that men learn the habits and ways of every other animal,—that is, by close observation. However, this is their affair, and it is not because impatient people have certain deficiencies that we complain of them, but for the trepidation, uneasiness, and failure they often induce. To be closely associated with an impatient man, otherwise amiable, is to be deprived of a good share of our own individuality. For, on the one hand, impatience is such a power, we are so annoyed at awaking it in our own person, it wounds our sensitiveness so keenly, that it drives us back into ourselves; and, on the other, it imposes upon us an undue burden of civility, forbearance, and good manners, and thus puts us in a false position.

But keen and ready wit is by no means the commonest promoter of impatience. It needs only for a man to think unduly well of himself, and to be bent on self-display, to be impatient in the most tormenting form of the disease. People are often intolerant of the

restraints of society because it is impossible to practise the self-glorification which has become essential to happiness in a scene where a man is obliged to seem one of a body met for general purposes, and occupied with each other's interests. Impatient men of this sort must be king of their company, secure of holding the thread of conversation in their own hands, or of being able to get away the instant they lose it. Again, all men of over-active brain and overtired energies are impatient. This, to be sure, is partly a physical infirmity, but the fault is moral also, arising from another form of self-occupation. The effort which such people have to make to bridle their too visible impatience, where escape is impossible, is sometimes quite pathetic ; there is such an air of the martyr, on occasions which, to the cooler observer, are quite inadequate for so piteous a resignation. Yet we ought to be indulgent to every effort of self-restraint ; for, if impatience implies no worse temper in its possessor than in others, it necessarily involves failures in good-nature. He eschews all the hard work of society. We are left in the lurch by our impatient friend on occasions where his co-operation might have lightened our load considerably, and where he knows this, but coolly pleads an idiosyncrasy. And impatience has more than passive ill-nature to answer for. No impatient man would like to see written down in black and white the ugly wishes he has bestowed by turns upon all near enough to cause him occasional inconvenience and perplexity. There are few of his best friends, we venture to assert, whom he has not at some time or other wished at the bottom of the sea, or anywhere in or out of space, so they were out of his way for good. And this from no innate hardness, but from abhorrence of a dilemma, and recoil from some pressing perplexity.

There is an impatience that, as far as we can judge, does not go much beyond nerves, which leads to perpetual locomotion. Once indulged, it renders a person incapable of sitting quiet for half an hour at a time. On a large scale, where people have time and money at command, the demon drives them from place to place. They live in railways, are perpetually popping in upon their friends, who know their visitant to be rather flying from what he dreads than prompted by any love of their society. He has just escaped

from something intolerable, and will presently—they care not how soon—find them intolerable in their turn. Not that these people are rendered unhappy by their restlessness. A thriving, well-indulged, normal impatience does not appear to disturb the comfort of its possessor. He simply wonders at and despises the apathy of the people about him. The person who cannot stand things, cannot endure things, and is amazed how others can stand, tolerate, put up with the life they lead, always feels the superior, and considers his disgust of sameness a mark of a higher organization. Impatience of this sort seems to arise from an intolerance of steps and processes. All people have it toward some things ; the impatient man is one who shows it toward everything. He rebels against gradual, step-by-step advance,—against the spaces that occur between the beginning and the end of every transaction, and which, indeed, constitute our idea of time. He acts as though he preferred the summary and index to the book itself. Whether the interval be what occurs between going and coming, between sitting down and rising up, between this and dinner-time, between the opening and the climax of a story, between the first statement of an argument and the conclusion, between the present moment and his turn to speak, his craving is that it shall be shortened. He would either do away with time, and thus shorten life, or he would cram it with more than it can hold or than human nature can live through. And we recognize this impatience by signs only too unmistakable, where it is held in the vice of necessity ; by sighs, jerks, fidgets, groans, biting of nails, drummings, tappings, yawnings, in various stages of development, as the natural tendency is partially restrained by good manners or allowed full play ; by interruptions and exclamations,—“ Yes, yes ! ” “ Well ! ” “ And so, ” “ And then, ” “ And did he ? ” and all the interjectional goads to greater despatch ; by rushings hither and thither, by slamming of doors, by callings, by hurry and bustle and flurried footsteps, by an incapacity to wait for anything, and frequently by an objection to be waited upon ; by an intolerance of peculiarities or unavoidable defects in others, by an exasperation under petty trials and minute inflictions, by a habit of unscrupulous interruption, and an unreasonable disgust at being interrupted.

We say that all these exhibitions and manifestations may proceed from mere restlessness of temperament ; but we can never be sure ; and this ought to make us tolerant of some forms of impatience, that it is perhaps the consequence of some temporary disorder and disturbance, which would excite our sympathy if we knew it. Thus the girl who tries us by swinging in and out of the room half a dozen times within the hour, or who has taken up and flung aside as many books in the same space of time, may be in love ; the young fellow who wonders how we can possibly exist in the dimness and dulness of our study, may be in debt. We all learn—or it is inexcusable if we do not—to bear with the impatience of physical suffering ; but this is often only a type of worse ailments,—suspense, gnawing anxiety, or some miserable secret that men carry about with them all unknown to their nearest friends, and which only finds relief in querulous impatience of trifles. A man has been detected in a rash speculation in the funds by a shrewd observer who knew how to interpret the slight signs of a suppressed impatience. The impatience of invalids has the further plea that it is unquestionably a fine restorative, a healthy sign. Dr. Johnson was decidedly better, though not far from his end, on the day when, after having movingly represented to all his friends the vacancy of his life and the value of letters to a sick man far from London and reasonable conversation, imploring them “to write, to write often,” he next snubs them all around with “I have three letters this day all about the balloon ; I could have been content with one ; do not write about the balloon, whatever else you may think proper to say.” And when our own sick friend, in the same spirit, snaps at us in our efforts for his diversion, with “I have heard that a dozen times ; you have told me that before,” we may console ourselves with the reflection that he is in a fair way, and that we are improving his appetite, if not his temper. Sameness and repetition are, indeed, wormwood to this condition of mind, from whatever cause proceeding. There is an uneasiness that dissolves all the ties of habit and association, and that must have change, irrespectively of any other advantage. This is the impatience which Wordsworth has painted in the bereaved lover’s “severish complaint.” The “cottage,” the “oak,” the “thrush,” are

all unendurable in their stationariness, as the rill is intolerable in its flow :—

“Thou Eglantine, so bright with sunny showers,
Proud as a rainbow spanning half the vale,
Thou one fair shrub, oh ! shed thy flowers
And stir not in the gale.
For thus to see thee nodding in the air,
To see thy arch thus stretch and bend,
Thus rise and thus descend—
Disturbs me till the sight is more than I can
bear.”

All people, to speak broadly, have their impatient side. Nobody is patient through every test. Very quiet and serene-looking persons are sometimes impatient of choice and deliberation,—they are impatient, that is, of anything that disturbs the quiet, natural flow of events. Those who live by habit and rule are impatient of interruption to the order of their lives. Many people are nervously impatient of being read to. To have to keep pace with other eyes and tongue, to receive ideas whether they will or not, to be tied down to the civility of listening ! altogether it produces a peculiar creepiness of irritation. We do not think we are mistaken in saying that all great talkers are impatient of other talkers, and resent the tax on their attention as a grievance and severe infliction ; and we believe that most successful talkers are impatient of every other form of relaxation, and have been so all their lives. Thus Sydney Smith was amusingly impatient of music. “Nothing,” he exclaims, “can be more disgusting than an oratorio !” “Music for such a length of time, unless under sentence of a jury, he would not submit to ;” and to offer him the whole range of so-called amusements was like tempting a tiger with barley-meal, or turning a leopard into clover. On the other hand, who can tell the frenzy of impatience that even good talk, if at all continuous, stirs up in persons whose notions of amusement take a more active turn,—in a party of young people, for example, condemned to listen to the best of conversers in the immediate neighborhood of a capital croquet-ground ?

Society is the one great check and physician for natural impatience,—that power before which all outbreaks are forbidden, which enjoins external civility to the bore, “though the hearer would prefer toothache or earache to his conversation.” It is only in extreme cases that men give full and free vent to impatience, when they know their time is

marked out for them, and a certain order of things inevitable. And there are educational lessons in patience which succeed if not carried beyond endurance, or tried upon the wrong people. A great example of the serene and imperturbable was trained in boyhood to this point by the terrible discipline of sitting at table two hours every day after dinner, doing absolutely nothing. He did not like it any better than other boys, but fortunately for him, he could think, and therefore stood it till practice developed in him a patience of really heroic proportions. Not but that there is a sort of noble impatience which has a work to do in the world, or a vast deal of fine writing in verse and prose has been thrown away. Of this we must presume that cutting the Gordian knot was an example, and Hotspur a fine specimen. Some enthusiastic Federal would possibly adduce General Grant as another instance, pictured, as he has been to the world, whittling through the course of a battle, to cool the sublime fever of command.

However, as a rule, nothing more incapacitates a man for the lead than impatience. No constitutionally impatient man, who has indulged his tendency, ever gets to the bottom of things, or knows with any nicety the standing disposition and circumstances of the people he is thrown, or has thrown himself, amongst. Certain salient points he is possessed of, but not what reconciles and accounts for them. Something in him—an obtrusive self, or a train of thought, or likings and antipathies—will always come between him and an impartial judgment. Neither does he win confidence, for he checks the coy, uncertain advances which are the precursors of it. We doubt if a thoroughly impatient man can read the heart, or be a fair critic, or understand the rights of any knotty question, or make himself master of any difficult situation. The power of waiting, deliberating, hanging in suspense, is necessary for all these,—the power of staving off for considerable periods of time merely personal leanings. We shall constantly find impatient persons, whatever their natural powers, possessed by mistaken impressions, and taking mistaken views of people and things. A lawyer, it is true, may be an impatient man, and yet a good lawyer, though law needs all the deliberating qualities we have touched upon; but in this case a great soberer, in the shape of

fees, has interposed; for, indeed, who can estimate the tranquilizing effect, upon the most fiery temperament, of the considerations that money is to be got by patience? So, whatever the original bias of those concerned, the business of the world is carried through, however dull most of it seems to the bystander?

We have spoken of waiting as a power, and much might be said on this point; for to know how long to wait and when to cease from waiting—how long to pause and when to resolve, constitutes, in no small degree, the virtue of punctuality and the proper limits of patience.

From *The Spectator*, 12 Nov.

MR. DAVIS'S LATEST PLAN.

THE South is apparently about to take the most important step yet tried in its political career. Convinc'd by fatal experience that the theory of negro cowardice is a prejudice merely, sorely pressed by want of recruits, and perhaps rendered desperate by the prospect of another four years of continued battle, they have resolved, it would seem, to arm all able-bodied negroes, and send them into the field. They have two millions of slaves still left, of whom four hundred thousand must be men qualified to bear arms, and their owners calculate that by thus doubling their armics at a blow they shall insure to themselves next campaign a certain victory. The plan is as yet of course only inchoate, for it requires the conjoint sanction of the State and the central legislatures, but it is openly discussed and defended at Richmond, is advised in a powerful letter by the governor of the Confederate section of Louisiana, and has, it is confidently stated, been unanimously adopted at a meeting of all the State governors. Even the details of the scheme are said to have been discussed. Every slave sent into the ranks will be enfranchised, but slavery will not be abolished, and the law which in every Slave State regulates the *status* of the child by that of the mother will not be repealed. The advocates of the measure expressly deny that it is abolitionist, and claim the planters' adhesion in the name, not of freedom, but of the patriotism which sacrifices property to the common weal. Thus limited, the measure may be carried, we think will be, for it has that strange double impress peculiar to the South. No race has ever made voluntarily a nobler sacrifice of property, no race ever made it with such a contempt for noble principle. These slaves are the pick of the plantations, the choice "hands" of the South, worth in times of

peace £100 per man, and the aristocracy therefore deliberately sacrifice forty millions sterling at one blow rather than surrender the cause to which they have devoted their lives. Englishmen could scarcely do more to preserve their country's freedom. Yet the object for which it is done, for which the Southern aristocrat surrenders wealth in the future as well as in the present, is mainly that he may retain the system the profit of which he is manfully throwing away. Else why not complete the act? If mere independence be his object, let him give loose to the higher impulses this awful struggle must have generated in his mind, and by one immense act of justice render subjugation impossible. Even now, with Grant behind Richmond and Sherman unhurt in Georgia, with every port blockaded, and every embouchure occupied, the South may win its game. Let it emancipate fully, frankly, and completely, admit its colored people to every right of white men, and guarantee its own resolve by intrusting the whole servile population with arms, and subjugation will be a moral impossibility. —The two hundred thousand negroes in the service of the Union are drawn southwards, could they but trust their former masters, by a hundred bonds, the love of family, the instinct of village attachment, the crave of men for their wives or mistresses, and their children, and without their hearty aid, the war, Mr. Lincoln admits, cannot be carried on. Its single moral issue will be at an end, and the backbone of the Union, the small party which postpones all material interests to one grand, moral conviction, will be paralyzed. The shock would be felt by opinion in every country of Europe, and the South acknowledged at last to be struggling with a single eye to its independence. Suffering elevates nations, and the South may yet rise to this temper, but as yet, though strong enough to forego the profit of their own system, they are too weak to recognize the iniquity which it involves. They can give up their slaves, but not their right of enslaving. They look forward to the time when their household ranks shall be recruited, and hope against hope that by sacrifices such as would add new lustre to the highest form of Christian character they may perpetuate a system which the highest paganism condemned. They show the spirit of martyrdom, in honor of a Fetish. No spectacle more strange has ever been presented to man since Leonidas recorded how his three hundred Spartans died for their country, and forgot the eleven hundred Helots who died around them.

The present scheme, limited as it is, must, we think, fail, though not perhaps for the reasons commonly assigned. Many observers in England believe that the Southern blacks

will not fight upon the Southern side; but the opinion rests, we think, upon very slender foundation. The experience of West Indian planters seems to show that slaves regard all oppressions suffered during their slavery as evil incidents, not as evil deeds, and are strangely, almost unintelligibly, forgiving. If they can trust their masters, a point on which no Englishman can enter into the mind of a Southern black, they may fight a race whom, as Mr. Lincoln said, "they have little cause to like," as well as the Mamelukes did under the same circumstances. The Russian serfs fought well, though they hated the army, and the power of military discipline over a race used to obey can hardly be over-estimated. If they distrust their masters' promises, they may desert, or even revolt, but if suspicion can be removed, they may fight well enough,—and the masters retain terrible hostages. The slaves who have fled have carried their children; the freedmen who desert must do it alone. It is hard to convince men brutalized by generations of servitude that they should struggle for a principle; they feel for their comrades, but they will do anything—hide in the swamps, crawl for months through jungle with pursuers behind them, live upon roots, meet death by torture—in order to obtain their personal liberty. Still less do we believe that they will, because armed, be able to dictate to their masters terms for the whole of their race. A military revolt—for any but a personal object—is a very rare and very exceptional occurrence, and the black regiments can hardly exceed in strength the regiments of white men. They will have against them, too, all the artillery, all the cavalry, all the remainder of the white population, and the traditional reverence of years. Remembering the complete defeat of the Sepoy army by a tithe of its own numbers, the coherence which dominance produces among the dominant race, and the patience of the negro, we see little reason to believe that he will, even if armed, revolt, but nevertheless, the scheme carries in it the seeds of ultimate failure.

Grant, in the first place, that all is done which by possibility can be done, that three hundred thousand negroes are armed, roughly drilled, and organized in working order, and what has the North to face? One more Southern army, perhaps as brave, but certainly less devoted than the last,—one more year of campaigning. The North loses no moral power,—rather, indeed, gains it,—for the Southerners with a hundred Sepoy regiments cannot affect to retain their present horror of negro soldiers, while the presence of negroes in the opposite ranks may convert even Democrats into advocates of abolition.

The North has simply so many more enemies,—to subdue eight millions of people instead of six. On the other hand, the enfranchisement will undoubtedly weaken the devotion of the white Southern private. He is fighting to remain one of a dominant caste, and shoulder to shoulder, equally privileged, stands a man of the inferior race, free as himself, legally exempted from kicking, and very dangerous indeed to kick. It is this danger to which the *Richmond Enquirer* points when it argues so strenuously that there is no degradation to the white in standing in line with the black man, and actually repeats in the capital of the South Mrs. Beecher Stowe's great argument, that as white children fondle black nurses there is no instinctive antipathy. The South is already suffering from the unwillingness of recruits to come in, and any great cause of discontent might increase the average of deserters till the South must give way from want of means any longer to keep the field. There are signs abroad already that this is the evil which the leaders chiefly fear,—the attenuation of their armies below the fighting point. Every speech of Mr. Davis has for its burden the necessity of conscription; the governors assembled in conclave have recommended new laws for the arrest of deserters; General Beauregard offers thirty days' grace to all who will come in. Indeed, the offer to arm the slaves is in itself a final proof of exhaustion; for we heard nothing of the courage of blacks while the armies were full. Emancipation would have shown a change in Southern opinion; enlistment only betrays an absolute necessity for men. The South is casting its fortunes royally into the gulf, but to win it must rise higher yet, and cast its cherished convictions after its less cherished cash.

THE ELECTION—THE WAR—EMANCIPATION.

SPEECH OF EDWARD EVERETT TO THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE OF MASSACHUSETTS.

ASSEMBLED at this time, in obedience to the will of the people of Massachusetts, signified by an almost unprecedented majority, we have completed, as far as this State is concerned, the august act of the 8th of November last. In connection with the electoral colleges of our sister States, we have this day given the final official utterance to the voice and will of the people of the United States, expressed in an election which, in many respects, has no example in the history of the world. Never before has been held an election throughout a territory like that which stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific

Ocean, organized in twenty-three republican States associated in one federative republican Union, meeting on the same day, in their respective towns, cities, and villages throughout the land,—with such mighty issues at stake,—an election held after the agitations of a strenuous canvass,—amidst the feverous excitement and under the heavy burdens of war, and that a civil war, which has clothed most every family in the country in mourning,—an election held under such circumstances, without the display of military force, without tumult or violence, without so much as a riot at the polls which has come to the knowledge of the public, and resulting in the reëlection of the chief magistrate of this imperial democracy,—that I must own, in my judgment, stands without a parallel in history in affairs of this kind, at the height of the moral sublime.

Nor is the sequel of this great civic act less grand and auspicious than its consummation. A contested election certainly does not often present a free country in the most favorable light. From the asperity of the canvass, one might have anticipated, at its close, that the successful party would break out into extravagant exultation, and the unsuccessful party give loud vent to the anger and bitterness of defeat.

But far otherwise; with rare exceptions on the part of individuals and presses, the victors have evinced a patriotic moderation, to which their opponents have responded by magnanimous acquiescence. We may, therefore, reasonably calculate on the efforts of good men, on all sides, to restore to our beloved and bleeding country the only thing that is now wanting to put an end to this fratricidal war, and bring about an honorable and a permanent peace; namely, an era of good feeling and "a determined unity of sentiment" on the part of the loyal States.

Nor do I despair of the success of these efforts. The state of the country now is very similar to what it was in the spring of 1861. We had then passed through a severely contested election, in which four different electoral tickets had struggled for the mastery. Public opinion was in fact more divided on that occasion than on this, and the result was proportionably less calculated to be satisfactory to the defeated parties. Notwithstanding this, at that fated signal gun at Sumter, the people, forgetful of all party di-

visions, sprung as one man to the defence of the country. All felt that the war was forced upon us; that it could not be declined; all felt that an insult too intolerable to be borne was offered to the national honor; that the attempt to dismember the Union of half its territory; to give up the outlets of its inland seas, and of the mighty rivers that drain its central basins; the fortresses that guard our shore and protect our coasting navigation,—to give them up not merely to a usurping foreign power, but to half a dozen separately feeble States, likely to be recolonized at no distant day by the European governments to which they so lately belonged,—all reflecting men felt that this was a blow aimed at the national life, which was to be warded off and repelled at all hazards and at every sacrifice. This was the sentiment of all good patriots of whatever party, and they rallied with one heart and as one man to the defence of the outraged flag and the imperilled Union.

But now came the great trial of popular government. In the conduct of a protracted war, difference of opinion as to men and measures was necessarily evolved. Such is ever the case even in times of profoundest peace. What wordy contests have we not, within the experience of some of us, had upon such questions as the Cumberland Road, internal improvements, the Bank of the United States, the Congress of Panama, the tariff, the distribution of the surplus revenue,—questions some of them so obsolete that this generation hardly knows what they mean; and yet the mighty powers of Webster, Clay, Calhoun, and their associates were mainly exhausted on these questions. Half the pages in the volumes of their speeches are filled with discussions, in which parliamentary talent is displayed in its highest forms, on subjects which, compared with the tremendous issues of the present day, are scarcely more interesting than the predictions of the weather in last year's almanac. If such subjects, in time of peace, can array the intelligent citizens of a free country in opposing parties, under the lead of the giant minds of the land,—if on issues like these presidential candidates could be chosen and defeated, administrations formed and broken up,—what diversities of judgment, what violence of dissent, what vehemence of antagonism, what bitterness of party opposition must not be

called forth by the exigencies of a war like that in which we are now engaged, involving questions so difficult, interests so momentous, forces so gigantic.

In this condition of the country and of the public mind, a presidential election such as I have described had to be met; and I am free to express the opinion that the manner in which it has been met, conducted, and decided reflects as much credit on the community as any event in our history. The political storm which had been gathering blackness for a twelvemonth burst upon the land, and unlike the storms in the natural world, which sometimes sweep forest and cornfield and the abodes of men before them, it has roared and passed by, and left not a trace behind.

The tumult of the elements is hushed; the air is still, and if the clouds are not wholly scattered, they are arched all over with the gracious bow of promise. The noble fabric of State stands as it stood before the election; not a timber in the framework strained; not a stone in the foundation loosened. The rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon the house, but it fell not, for it was founded on a rock; yes, upon the Rock of Ages; and there neither the arts of treason, the arms of rebellion, no, not the gates of hell itself shall prevail against it.

Passing, as the country has, unscathed through this fearful ordeal, coming out of this marvellous election with the kindest feelings on the part of the triumphant majority toward the patriotic masses lately opposed to them, why should we not again, as one man, rally to the support of the government? There is now really but one question which divides those who hold, in good faith, that the military power of the rebellion must be subdued and the Union preserved at all hazards. I allude, of course, to the policy of emancipation; and will not our opposing friends who so warmly disapprove that policy, and who think it creates an insuperable obstacle to the restoration of the Union, reconsider that opinion, on perusal of the remarkable letter of the second officer of the Confederacy written on the 5th of November, three days before the election,—a private letter, but now published by himself, by far the most important utterance, on this subject, which has reached us from the South. In this letter Mr. Stephens (the ablest civilian in the Con-

federacy) assigns the reasons why he desired the election of General McClellan. In that event, he assumed that an armistice would take place, and a convention of the States be held.

If that body failed to come to an amicable agreement to acknowledge the independence of the South, and "General McClellan should renew the war, with the avowed object of restoring the Union with the old Constitution and all its guarantees,"—which by his letter of acceptance he was pledged to do,— "At that moment," says Mr. Stephens, "or as soon as possible, our recognition abroad would come. The silent sympathy of England, France, and other European powers, at present, with Lincoln, arises entirely from their *mania* on the subject of slavery." Here follows an omission in Mr. Stephen's letter, made as he himself intimates from public considerations. The passage omitted no doubt enforced the idea that if the North continued the war in order to restore the Constitution with guarantees of slavery, Europe would instantly recognize the Confederacy as an independent power. Mr. Stephens then proceeds as follows : "Lincoln had either to witness our recognition abroad, the moral power of which alone he saw would break down the war, or to make it an emancipation war.

"He chose the latter alternative, and the more readily, because it chimed in so accordantly with the feelings and views of his party. This, in my opinion, is the plain English of this whole matter, and just so soon as McClellan should renew the war to restore the Union and the old Constitution with slavery, would England, France, and the other European powers throw all the moral power and influence of their recognition on our side. I am not certain that they would not go further rather than see the old Union re-

stored, if it should become necessary; but it would not become necessary."

In these explicit terms, the second officer of the rebel government, speaking no doubt on the strength of communications from their agents abroad, and holding back what he deemed it not prudent to divulge, not only treats the emancipation policy of the President as a necessary military measure, but maintains that that alone had prevented the great powers of Europe from recognizing the independence of the South, and if necessary throwing their swords into the scale to secure its establishment! May we not reasonably hope, in view of such opinions and disclosures, from such a quarter, that this policy will cease to divide opinion at the North, and that we shall again, as in 1861, present an undivided front in defence of the integrity of the Union. Heavy, I know, is the burden, costly the sacrifice, grievous the trial imposed upon us by the war. Heaven is my witness that I would willingly have laid down the poor remnant of my life to avert it.

But it is plain that Providence has laid upon our generation the solemn duty of maintaining this august nationality, and we have now to choose between allowing the Union, like mediæval Germany and Italy, to be broken up into scores, I might say hundreds, of petty States, involved in eternal border wars, wasting, desolating, and barbarizing each other, and ending at last in the establishment of half a dozen military despotisms, or maintaining, at whatever cost and by whatever sacrifice, this admirable framework of government, the rich legacy of our Fathers, the priceless heritage of our children, and which, till this cruel rebellion, had shown itself the happiest device of human wisdom, by which the home-bred blessings of local administration can be combined with the safety and power of a great empire.

VERY SHOCKING, IF TRUE.—At a dinner-party the plebeian habits of one of the guests had attracted very general attention. Amongst other mistakes he used his knife improperly in eating. At length a wag asked aloud, "Have you heard of poor L——'s sad affair? I met him at a party yesterday, apparently well and cheerful :

when at the dinner-table, to our great horror, he suddenly took up the knife, and"— "Good heavens!" interposed one of the ladies; "and did he cut his throat?" "Why no," answered the relator, "he did not cut his throat with his knife; but we all expected he would, for he actually put it up to his mouth."

THE MERMAID.

“ O FISHER, standing by thy wherry,
Wherefore thy knife so fiercely whet?
What fishes from the depths of ocean
Hast won by power of line and net? ”

“ Ah, never fish is here, young madam,
And nothing fit for pot or dish;
But peep into my net, and merely
Behold a serpent, if you wish !

“ My helm and rudder, for the last time,
The witch has broken wantonly,
But long ago she dragged my brother
Down to the bottom of the sea.

“ And there she lingers, gasping, bleeding,
Done with her cruel prank and jest,—
And thus I plunge, to end her sinning,
My fatal knife into her breast ! ”

“ Hold, hold, thou villain ! for she liveth,
Panting with snowy bosom bare !
And mark, how piteously the water
Is moaning through her sea-green hair !

“ Her ivory arms and gleaming shoulders
Bleeding already from thy knife,
Palid upon the strand she trembles,
And quickly yieldeth up her life.

“ Come, man ! I am thy master’s lady !
Push out thy wherry from the shore,
And quickly—for the tempest gathers—
Grasp firm in either hand an oar.

“ Come ! and the ocean’s hapless daughter
We twain will take across the foam,
And bear her till in deeper water
We sink her to her weedy home ! ”

Over the billows rowed the fisher,
And blacker grew the sea the while,
Stormier grew the clouds of heaven
Casting their shade on sea and isle.

Back unto land they rowed in safety ;
But now, within her castle gates,
The lady, trembling for her husband,
Who wanders out on ocean, waits.

The darkness came. The tempest gathered,
And thunders muttered loud and deep ;
Murmured a voice in Thora’s chamber
“ Thora, my Thora, dost thou sleep ? ”

“ Ah, is it thou, my love, my Erik ?
Or awfully upon my rest
Breaketh a voice that is not human ?—
If thou be Erik, to my breast ! ”

“ No spectre, wife, comes thus at midnight
To the sweet chamber where you lie,
Lit by the slowly dying lamplight—
Thora, my Thora—it is I ! ”

“ Ha ! from the clay-chill dead thou comest
Thy garments drip, thy touch is cold !
But still I love thee, dead or living,
And here are kisses twentyfold.”

“ Well may my hands be icy-cold, wife,
Well may my face be chill and white,—

But here my living heart is throbbing
Freshly as on our bridal night.

“ To-night the fury of the tempest
Drove us upon the rocky strand,
And I and mine sprung into ocean,
Thinking full soon to swim to land.

“ But high and strong the storm-tost ocean
Threw up in foam the groaning wave ;
‘ Farewell ! ’ I gasped amid the tempest,
Seeming to look upon my grave.

“ Dead faces in my vision floated,
And, Thora dear, I thought of you,
What time my arms dropt spent beside me,
Stiffened with swimming, cold and blue.

“ But lo ! there gripped me round the bosom
Two hands that white as crystal shone,
Two bloody arms my head uplifted,
And held me up, and pushed me on.

“ Then, by the faint cold gleam of heaven,
I saw a mermaid’s breast beneath,
And through the blackness of the waters
The glimmering of her pearly teeth.

“ I saw her coldly glistening shoulder,
Her face that glimmered strangely sweet—
Her hands relaxed not, till with rapture
I felt the ground beneath my feet.

“ Come ! now forgot be storm and terror ! ”
He quenched the lamp’s uncertain glare.
Pale Thora clasped him, and the tempest
Moved further off from that glad pair !

—From the Danish.

RETROSPECTION.

I TRACE the long line of my bygone years,
As one who, standing midway on a bridge,
Looks back upon the vista of its lamps,
Which burning equi-distant, mock the eye
With seeming continuity of fire,
Until, together blending, all at last
Pale in perspective mistiness of light,
And so confuse distinction. Thus do I
My near experience trace, to lose at last
In tremulous manhood and the glow of youth
The standard lights that backward mark the way
To undefined beginnings, Happy ‘tis,
’Tis wisely thus ordained, for memoried past
Should ever subject be to present need,
Nor bind advancement unto vain regret.
Ever on life’s long bridge, environed lamps
Light the immediate : all before, behind,
Dwindle into attenuated threads,
Losing their endings to the common eye.
O knowledge impotent ! that cannot change
One moment of the moments that have been :
O knowledge blind as dust ! that cannot pierce
One moment of the moments that shall be :
O knowledge infinite and strong as truth !
That can the present moment grandly turn
To worthiest fulfilment, and advance
Through each succeeding present, on and on,
Unto a timeless, measureless content.

—Transcript.

T.